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Official Organ of the
Attakapas Historical Association
published in cooperation with the
Center for Louisiana Studies
University of Southwestern Louisiana

Managing Editor: Carl A. Brasseaux

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Consulting Editors: Glenn R. Conrad, Mathé Allain

Dues Schedule:

Life membership for individuals: \$100.00

Annual dues for individuals:

- a. Active or Associate (out-of-state) membership: \$5.00
- b. Contributing membership: \$15.00
- c. Patron membership: \$20.00

Annual Institutional Dues:

- a. Regular: \$5.00
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Canadian dues: Same as American dues, payable in U.S. dollars.

Foreign dues: \$5.00 plus postage.

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Frederick Law Olmsted

EARLY ACADIANA THROUGH ANGLO-AMERICAN EYES

By Timothy F. Reilly

[Editor's Note: This article is the first of a projected three-part series on early Acadiana.]

Part I

Peoples in America and northwestern Europe hold certain deleterious stereotypes and misconceptions of Louisiana's Acadian culture. Many outsiders have long harbored a simplistic view of the Cajun which has overtones of condescension, bafflement, or one-sided humor. One result of this negative radiation of culture has been a continuation of Acadian insularity from the outside world, a phenomenon which has been alternately praised and condemned. It must also be said that there are still many Acadians who are apparently unconcerned about their culture's image in the outside world.

The "insular" Acadian may come from virtually any socio-economic or education background. He is at least vaguely aware that his people have suffered at one time or another at the hands of an alien foe. The enemy may have been among the first shipload of British soldiers to have set foot on Nova Scotian soil, or perhaps he was one of the first North Louisiana political officeholders to have entered the state capitol. Although he may bear no grudge whatsoever, the "insular" Acadian often realizes that down through the history of the South, his people have remained alone in their preservation of a separate language, religious affiliation, and blood relationship. The desire to continue these traditions is still widespread among many of the peoples of southern Louisiana.

Acadian insularity has been nurtured and sustained from both within and without. In regard to outside forces, this paper will attempt to find and examine the roots of a cultural interpretation composed by visiting journalists and scholars and later disseminated by a limited variety of publications throughout much of the English-speaking world. While some positive observations were made by the inquiring outlander, much of the reporting was highly unfavorable. The nineteenth century reader, often searching for the traveler's most exotic and sensational notes, undoubtedly found the Acadian peoples delightfully different. They were certainly not typical. Some readers may have reacted in self-righteous indignation to the Acadians' non-conformity to Anglo-Saxon, Protestant mores. In whichever way the reader may have reacted, the traveler's account was calculated to inform, as well as entertain. It was most assuredly written to sell. Whether truthful or fallacious, whether favorable or unfavorable, the nineteenth century writings of a handful of visitors were highly influential in forming the pervasive myths that linger to the present.

One of the most complimentary portrayals of Acadian hospitality was written by Frederick Law Olmsted. This distinguished journalist and landscape architect traveled through southern Louisiana near the end of the antebellum period and provided a fairly detailed description of the state's French and English-speaking communities. Olmsted made a point of contrasting the quiet manners and apparent gentleness of the rural French with the rather crass and blustery behavior of his Anglo-Saxon brothers and sisters. During one leg of his journey, which involved the abrupt topographic and demographic transition from the pine flats of east Texas to Louisiana's sparsely populated prairie lands, he was struck by the difference in the French inhabitants' speech and tone:



Col. Samuel H. Lockett

The people, after passing the frontier, changed in every prominent characteristic. French became the prevailing language, and French the prevailing manners. The gruff Texan bidding, 'Sit up, stranger; take some fry!' became a matter of recollection, of which 'Monsieur, la soupe est servie,' was the smooth substitute. The good-nature of the people was an incessant astonishment.... (1)

Olmsted commented that many a roadside inhabitant was not merely content to give directions. Meeting a stranger on the lonesome prairie trails between Lake Charles and Opelousas often proved to be a day's most interesting event, especially if the traveler showed some refinement and courtesy. New Yorker Olmsted was deeply impressed by one "contented old gentleman" who "waddled out and showed us also his wife's house-pet, an immense white crane." The amenities were not over until their host had shown the travelers his prized fig tree, as well as his sizable peach crop. Upon departure, Olmsted and his companion were given bouquets of jessamines and a sincere "bon voyage." (2)

Of course, not all the prairie settlers were Acadians. One gentleman, known as "Old Man Corse," was a Franco-Italian immigrant whose peculiar name was derived from his native island, Corsica. (3) Some inhabitants apparently lacked a clear idea of their European ancestry. Olmsted spent one night in the home of a French-speaking farmer who described himself as "Dutch-American." The farmer could not successfully explain his Dutch origins despite his use of the French language. At any rate, Olmsted met with the same friendliness here as he had encountered among the Acadians. (4)

On entering the house, we were met by two young boys, gentle and winning in manner, coming up of their own accord to offer us their hands. They were immediately set to work by their father at grinding corn, in the steel-mill, for supper. (5)

Olmsted observed that the boys' parents spoke a mixture of French and English, often combining the languages in a single sentence. He and his friend were later ushered to the household's limited number of deer-hide chairs for the evening meal. Without fanfare, the two guests washed their hands in a simple cake pan perched on the window ledge. A dry rag was placed nearby. Drinking water was supplied in "one battered tin cup." (6)

In contrast to Olmsted's largely favorable account of his own experiences in Acadiana is a more recent composition written by Colonel Samuel H. Lockett, C.S.A. (7) A Virginia native who grew up in Alabama, Colonel Lockett found that his reception among French-speaking people yielded varying results. At one point he complained that he could not understand the *lingua franca* of St. Landry Parish. After he made numerous inquiries as to the whereabouts of Joe Chaumont's Ferry, Lockett concluded that he could not properly communicate, end.

1. Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas; or, a Saddle-trip on the Southwestern Frontier* (2 vols.; New York: Dix, Edwards & Co., 1857), II, p. 394.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 403.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 402.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 403, 405.

7. Colonel Lockett's original manuscript is located in the Department of Archives, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University. A significant part of Lockett's material on southwest Louisiana was actually written by Colonel Daniel Dennett, editor of the *Planters' Banner* of Franklin.



High Water (From Harper's Weekly)



Scenery along the Teche, 1853
(From Harper's Weekly)

somewhat dourly, withdrew into his shell. "My stock of pure French was never a superabundant one," he admitted, stating further that his knowledge of the "Creole patois" was even less extensive. He notes rather glumly, "I did but very little talking in my journeyings through the greater part of the Attakapas Country." (8)

But Lockett seems to have had good relations with Acadian dwellers who had mastered English. While traveling through the eastern fringes of the Atchafalaya Basin, he invariably met with kindness among the "Americanized" French. In the parish of Pointe Coupee, the solitary Lockett was spared a night in the dismal woods along Bayou Grosse Tete thanks to *Monsieur Hoquet*. This "genuine Frenchman" apologized to Lockett for the humble accommodations, but offered to share all that he had. During the decade prior to Lockett's arrival, the Hoquet family had experienced five overflows. Despite the loss of fences, livestock, and crops, this sturdy yeoman of the backswamp was "as polite and hospitable as a man of unlimited means," and he readily explained his misfortunes to his overnight guest. (9)

I said to M. Hoguet, 'How is it possible to live here when the water is so high?' He had previously told me that he had stuck to his home through all the floods. 'Well, sare,' said he, 've go into ze garret like one cat, ze chickens goes to roost on ze roof of ze house and stays there till ze waters fall; I catches all ze pigs and cows, and ze horses zat I can, and puts zem into ze gallery and ze lower rooms.'

'But what do you eat, and what do you feed your stock on?'

'Well sare, I saves some little rice and corn and hay in ze garret, and ve fish in one hold in ze floor of my house, and ve catch catfish and one basket full of *crawfish every day*.'

'How do you get wood for your cooking?'

'Oh, sare, I go in ze canoe and pull ze dry limbs from ze trees.' And thus I was made to understand that it was possible for a whole family to live in its home with an ocean of water around it for three or four weeks at a time. (10)

Lockett attempted to explore the interior of the great swamp, but he was discouraged from doing so by the local inhabitants. Numerous overflows had obliterated many of the roads which led into the Grand River and Atchafalaya basins; a stranger winding his way through the watery maze would have been hard pressed to find help if he happened to need it. Lockett turned his horse southward and traveled through the parishes of Iberville, Ascension, Assumption, Lafourche, Terrebonne and St. Mary. (11)

Since Lockett had numerous Anglo-Saxon friends in this part of Louisiana, he had little or no social contact with the French population as he found lodgings among the sugar planters along Bayou Lafourche and in Terrebonne Parish. (12) The former Confederate officer had a natural hankering to see old friends and allies whom he had not visited for several years.

8. Lauren C. Post, ed., *Louisiana As It Is: A Geographical and Topographical Description of the State*, Samuel H. Lockett (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), p. 25.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 21, 22.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 22.

The Southern Anglo-Saxon's avoidance of the French-speaking population in this instance is in humorous contrariety to New Yorker Frederick Olmsted, whose Yankee instincts and fluent French consistently nudged him not away, but toward the Acadian hearthside. At one point, Olmsted's journey suddenly revolved from disappointment to pleasant surprise. "Next day we were recommended to stop at Jack Bacon's," he said, "and, although we would have preferred to avoid an American's, did so rather than go further, and found our Jack Bacon a Creole, named Jacques Béquin." (13)

One of the most interesting antebellum descriptions of cultural bi-polarity and exchange among the French and Anglo-Saxon settlers was supplied by Olmsted. The curious New Yorker made a point of asking several persons to state their social views concerning their own locality or a neighboring community. As he traveled through the western prairies, Olmsted found that intermarriage was not unusual among the varied ethnic groups. At the Franco-Italian household of "Old Man Corse," Olmsted listened to the heavy accents of Italian, French and "American." (14) During his overnight stay in this miniature Babel, Olmsted conversed at length with his host's elderly but energetic wife:

In the evening smoke, upon the settle, we learned that there were many Creoles about here, most of whom learned English, and had their children taught English at the schools. The Americans would not take the trouble to learn French. They often intermarried. A daughter of their own was the wife of an American neighbour. We asked if they knew of a distinct people here called Acadians. Oh yes, they knew many settled in the vicinity descended from some nation that came here in the last century. They had now no peculiarities....(15).

While social life in the western frontier regions weakened the importance of class and racial restrictions, it may also have helped to reduce the strength of religious bonds. Louisiana's more densely populated eastern settlements were frequently successful in affirming a strong religious identification, but Olmsted found that frontier Catholicism in southwestern Louisiana was perhaps not as pervasive. In a friendly conversation with a sixty-year-old slave, a native of Virginia owned by the Corsican, the inquisitive Yankee detected a hunger for religious involvement:

'I suppose you became a Catholic after you got here?'

'Yes, sar' (hesitatingly).

'I suppose all the people are Catholics here?'

'Here? Oh, no, sar; they was whar I was first in this country; they

13. Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas*, p. 395.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 396.

15. *Ibid.*

was all Catholics there.'

'Well, they are all Catholics here, too--ain't they?'

'Here, sar? Here, sar? Oh, no, sar!'

'Why, your master is not a Protestant, is he?'

After two deep groans, he replied in a whisper:

'Oh, sar, they don' have no meetin' o' no kind, rou' here!' (16)

By the time Olmsted reached Opelousas, he was able to more clearly discern a separation between the French and Anglo-Saxon societies. A traveling businessman who had spent two years in Louisiana gave Olmsted a sharply critical view of the structure of society. He characterized the region's "wealthy Creole planters" as the equals of the "better class of American planters." He added that in addition to being as cultivated and intelligent as the Americans, the upper-class French were "usually more refined." (17) But Olmsted's acquaintance claimed that the small farmers who lived along the bayous were not as well off as their cousins in the bordering bluffs and prairies. And it was his more detailed description of the poorer lowland peoples which Olmsted incorporated into his notes and which later helped to mold some of the negative stereotypes of Acadian life:

...The lowest class live much from hand to mouth, and are often in extreme destitution. This was more particularly the case with those who lived on the river; those who resided on the prairies were seldom so much reduced. The former now live only on those parts of the river to which the backswamp approaches nearest; that is, where there is but little valuable land, that can be appropriated for plantation-purposes. They almost all reside in communities, very closely housed in poor cabins. If there is any considerable number of them, there is to be always found, among the cluster of their cabins, a church, and a billiard and gambling-room--and the latter is always occupied, and play going on.

...The women were often handsome, stately, and graceful, and, ordinarily, exceedingly kind; but languid, and incredibly indolent, unless there was a ball, or some other excitement, to engage them. Under excitement, they were splendidly animated, impetuous, and eccentric. One moment they seemed possessed by a devil, and the next by an angel.

The Creoles are inveterate gamblers--rich and poor alike. The majority of wealthy Creoles, he said, do nothing to improve their estate; and are very apt to live beyond their income. They borrow and play, and keep borrowing to play, as long as they can; but they will not part with their land, and especially with their home, as long as they can help it, by any sacrifice.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 399.

17. Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, with Remarks on their Economy* [2 vols.; New York: Dix, Edwards & Co., 1856], I, p. 650.

The men are generally dissolute. They have large families, and a great deal of family affection. He did not know that they had more than Anglo-Saxons; but they certainly manifested a great deal more, and, he thought, had more domestic happiness. If a Creole farmer's child marries, he will build a house for the new couple, adjoining his own; and when another marries, he builds another house--so, often his whole front on the river is at length occupied. Then he begins to build others, back of the first--and so, there gradually forms a little village, wherever there is a large Creole family, owning any considerable piece of land. The children are poorly educated, and are not brought up to industry, at all.

The planters living near them, as their needs increase, lend them money, and get mortgages on their land, or, in some way or other, if it is of any value, force them to part with it. Thus they are every year reduced, more and more, to the poorest lands; and the majority now are able to get but a very poor living, and would not be able to live at all in a Northern climate. They are nevertheless--even the poorest of them--habitually gay and careless, as well as kind-hearted, hospitable, and dissolute--working little, and spending much of their time at church, or at halls, or the gaming-table. (18)

It is difficult to believe that Olmsted personally accepted all of the generalizations concerning the plain folk of the bayou. He had just encountered a relatively high degree of intelligence, energy, and kindness among the French-speaking settlers of the prairie lands. Nevertheless, the New York journalist incorporated the commercial traveler's observations into his published account which later circulated throughout much of Europe and the English-speaking world. Here, indeed, lies at least one seed kernel of a persistent social stereotype.

There was some basis for a number of Olmsted's second-hand observations. For example, quite often the poorer farmers did indeed occupy the backswamps while the wealthier planters--who, incidentally, were either Creoles or Anglo-Saxons--frequently dominated the higher levee slopes nearest the better roads and the more prosperous communities. The two or three-room cottage of the *petit habitant* was simple and unadorned. Deep affection and close family ties among the French were sharply in contrast with Anglo-Saxon mobility and prolonged separation, and free public education throughout all of rural Louisiana at the time and for generations afterward was sadly deficient. (19)

Some of Olmsted's observations should be questioned. The notion that a Frenchman spent much of his time leaning over the edge of a billiard table undoubtedly got widespread circulation among Louisiana's Protestant fundamentalists. The blinkered morality of the piney woods evangelist tolerated no gambling games of any kind. Small wonder, then, that these bold Catholics were ordinarily described while in the practice of committing their peculiar vices. The French women were also said to enjoy dancing; thus the innocence and harmony surrounding the beloved *fais do do* gradually took on the aura of a lurid "ball." Such goings-on were permitted and sometimes even sanctioned by that age-old enemy, the Romish Church. Was there the slightest doubt that a Frenchman's evil recreational pursuits were the cause of his improvidence?

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 648, 649, 650.

19. T. H. Harris, *The Story of Education in Louisiana* (New Orleans: Dalgado Trades School, 1924), p. 10; Roger W. Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana, 1840-1875* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1939), pp. 74, 75.

Olmsted also devoted considerable attention to slavery in Acadiana. His assessment of the "peculiar institution" provides substance to the thesis that regional peculiarities induced some changes in the South's slave system. The same business acquaintance who described the poor white population contributed an analysis of local slavery which Olmsted utilized in his published account:

The Creoles, he said, did not work their slaves as hard as the Americans; but, on the other hand, they did not feed or clothe them nearly as well, and he had noticed universally, on the Creole plantations, a large number of 'used-up hands'--slaves, sore and crippled, or invalided for some cause. On all sugar plantations, he said, they work the negroes excessively, in the grinding season; often cruelly. Under the usual system, to keep the fires burning, and the works constantly supplied, eighteen hours' work was required of every negro, in twenty-four--leaving but six for rest. The work of most of them, too, was very hard. They were generally, during the grinding season, liberally supplied with food and coffee, and were induced, as much as possible, to make a kind of frolic of it; yet, on the Creole plantations, he thought they did not, even in the grinding season, often get meat. (20)

Despite state laws requiring slave masters to serve meat regularly to their chattel and forbidding the working of slaves on Sunday without some kind of compensation, many planters did as they pleased. Rarely did a resident dare to prefer charges against a neighbor who was maltreating his blacks; to have done so often meant the vengeful retribution of the lawbreaker's relatives and friends. A man's capital investment was his own private business. A master who granted certain privileges to his slave property sometimes provoked discontent among his neighbors and their slaves. There were growing restrictions against slave meetings of any kind. (21)

From the talkative wife of "Old Man Corse," Olmsted learned that a large number of free persons of color resided in the Opelousas area, "some of whom were rich and owned slaves." The free Negroes were said to be pure black as well as mixed, and they tended to avoid white society altogether. The aforementioned slave belonging to "Old Man Corse" told Olmsted that he considered himself lucky to have such a good master, explaining that the elderly Corsican was not a hard taskmaster. At the same time he confessed that he thought it wrong for blacks to own blacks. The elderly slave--in a round-about way--also indicated some knowledge of northern abolitionist feelings. It became apparent that information obtained during his early years in Virginia had been disseminated during his years in far-off Louisiana. (22)

The investigative Olmsted encountered little in the way of miscegenation in the more isolated portion of the western prairie. While staying overnight in the home of Jack Bacon (Jacques Béguin), he noticed two Indian males, apparently Choctaw, who worked as farm laborers with the blacks. A small Indian lad dressed in "negro clothing" reportedly lived with some of the black folk who ran the plantation corn mill. The boy received no wages; the

20. Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, p. 650.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 651.

22. Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas*, pp. 397, 399, 400.

two older Indians received 37 ½ cents per day. Olmsted was told that some of the Indians were hard workers, but that others proved unsteady and unreliable. Rarely did members of the two races consort, but *Monsieur* Bacon knew of one black man who had an Indian wife. (23)

One of the most informative accounts of life among black farm owners was given by Colonel Lockett, whose trip through the Acadian countryside occurred more than a decade after Olmsted's famous jaunt through Louisiana. By then, emancipation and the Civil War had changed the status of all Negroes. While in the vicinity of Bayou Nez Pique, Lockett entered the residence of one Pierre Noir:

M. Pierre was not at home, but his wife, a genuine negress, received us with great politeness and cordiality, served us with a cool drink of water, and then set before us a waiter filled with peaches, figs, slices of rich red watermelons, and golden cantalopes. Such an abundance of luscious fruit I had not seen before in my travels.... While retracing our steps I learned the following facts about this negro family. They had come to the western border of Prairie Mamou since the war and settled in a point of woods that projected into the Prairie like a cape into the sea. Pierre entered the land upon which he settled, enclosed with fences several hundred acres of woodland and prairie, and divided his domain into lots of about forty acres area each. He has systematically pursued the following plan in the management of his stock and farm with the most satisfactory results. His horses and cattle run upon the common prairie during the grass season, but they are regularly driven into one of the lots for salting at stated intervals. In another the cows with young calves and the mares with colts are kept, and all the herds are kept under fence during the winter and fed. In this way one half of the farm is tramped and thoroughly manured, and put in fine condition for receiving a crop the next season.

While this half is making an abundant supply of provisions for the family and winter food for the cattle, the other half in its turn is restored to fertility, and thus the land and animals are both kept in admirable order the year round. By this management M. Pierre has become famed far and wide as being the owner of the best stock in the Prairie. He is reputed to be worth some ten or twelve thousand dollars in hard cash, in addition to the large herds of horses, cows, and sheep he owns, and the fine farm he so successfully cultivates. All of this was in marked contrast to the style of living of most of the Creoles in the Prairies. Their half-mud huts generally stand in the open prairie, with hardly a yard and garden under fence, and their cattle run uncared for on the Prairies the year through. In consequence, the Creole ponies have degenerated into a breed of shaggy little brutes almost worthless except for light riding, and a Creole cow is absolutely without value save for her hide when she is old, and her meat when she is young, tender, and fat. (24)

23. *Ibid.*, p. 401.

24. *Post, Louisiana As It Is.*, p. 26.

Lockett's disdain for the prairie's livestock industry was partly corroborated by Olmsted, who described the horses as "wretched in appearance," the result of allowing the "common scurvy sort to run with the mares." Prairie grasses were described as "short and coarse." (25) At one point, Lockett was forced to ride one of the diminutive beasts while crossing Bayou Whiskey Chitto. "As swimming was not one of their accomplishments," said he, "we had some considerable trouble in effecting a passage with them." While traveling overland through the Pine Hills, Lockett was forced to dismount and pull his horse by the bridle. "This experience," he said, "convinced me that an attempt to prosecute the rest of the summer's work with one of them would be worse than useless." (26)

Not all Anglo-Saxon visitors, however, shared Lockett's dim view of southwest Louisiana's cattle industry. As early as 1815, William Darby wrote of the "vast herds of cattle" of the Attakapas and Opelousas prairies, "which afford subsistence to the natives, and the inhabitants of the city of New Orleans." (27) But unlike his successors, Olmsted and Lockett, Darby described the prairies as a veritable Eden of teeming animal life and lush verdure:

It is certainly one of the most agreeable views in nature, to behold from a point of elevation, thousands of horses and cows, of all sizes, scattered over the interminable mead, intermingled in wild confusion. The mind feels a glow of corresponding innocent enjoyment, with those useful and inoffensive animals grazing in a sea of plenty. If the active horsemen that guard them, would keep their distance, fancy would transport us backwards into the pastoral ages. (28)

Unlike Olmsted and Lockett, the enthusiastic Darby wrote of the area's great cattle barons, who, near the beginning of the nineteenth century carved the prairies into their own fiefdoms bordered by forest galleries and streams. A prairie often served as a vast cove of private management and defense, where the cattleman's word was the law of the land:

The prairie Mamou is devoted by the present inhabitants to the rearing of cattle, some of the largest herds in Opelousas are within its precincts. Three rich stockholders have, as if by consent, settled their vacheries in three distinct prairies. Mr. [William] Wi[c]koff, in the Calcasu [sic] prairie, west of the Nezpique, Mr. [Jacques] Fontenot in prairie Mamou; and Mr. [William] Andrus in Opelousas prairie. Those three gentlemen must have collectively, at the moment this article is written, fifteen or twenty thousand head of neat cattle, with several hundred horses and mules. It may be presumed that Mr. Wi[c]koff is at this time the greatest pastoral farmer in the United States. (29)

25. Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas*, p. 404.

26. Post, *Louisiana As It Is*, p. 27.

27. William Darby, *A Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana...with an account of the character and manner of the inhabitants* (Philadelphia: John Melish, 1816), p. 85.

28. *Ibid.*; pp. 85, 86.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 90.



An 1883 Sketch of the Attakapas Prairie

A few years later, Edmund Dana also took notice of the "prodigious stocks of cattle" of the southwestern prairies which furnished New Orleans with beef, cheese, and butter, and were of "great profit to the proprietors." Cotton was said to be "the prevailing crop in the greater parts of Attacapas [sic] and Opelousas," while sugar cane was raised along the lower districts of the meandering Teche. Dana also described the country's horses as small, but "compactly and vigorously built." Indeed, Colonel Lockett would have probably argued with Dana's further testimony that the prairie horses were built "to endure labor and fatigue almost beyond conception." Dana also described the local cattle as "sleek as moles, nimble and high mettled, and elegantly formed." While he praised their meat as "well flavored and good," he noted that they normally contributed little milk. Sheep farming was said to be an enterprise of the Opelousas area. He pronounced the mutton to be "excellent," but the wool he described as "coarse." (30)

The aforementioned Darby also gave special credit to the early French and Anglo-Saxon planters of the Teche region, who succeeded in building a sugar culture which was later to become the equal of the eastern sugar-producing districts of Bayou Lafourche and the lower Mississippi River Valley. He singled out one landowner in particular, Judge Seth Lewis, who intended to enlarge his cultivable holdings by draining thousands of acres. (31) Several other planters were also engaged in efforts to improve the sugar-growing industry. When Dana passed through the Teche district a few years later, he commented that the "sugar cane flourishes well." (32)

Two generations later, Olmsted presented a prophetic as well as descriptive view of the western prairie as he traversed the area northeast of Lake Charles by horseback. He had recently passed through the relatively empty forests between the Sabine and Calcasieu rivers:

Some of the timbered land, for a few years after clearing, yields good crops of corn and sweet potatoes. Cotton is seldom attempted, and sugar only for family use. Oats are sometimes grown, but the yield is small, and seldom thrashed from the straw. We noted one field of poor rye. So wet a region and so warm a climate suggested rice, and, were the land sufficiently fertile, it would, doubtless, become a staple production. It is now only cultivated for home use, the bayou bottoms being rudely arranged for flowing the crop. But without manure no profitable return can be obtained from breaking the prairie, and the only system of manuring in use is that of ploughing up occasionally the cow-pens of the herdsmen. (33)

While at the home of his "Dutch-American" host, who, incidentally, spoke only French, Olmsted examined a twenty-acre tract containing cotton, sweet potatoes, and "the best corn we had seen east of the Brazos." This property was located about ten miles west of Opelousas. The small farmer, who did not own slaves, commonly hired his neighbors' slaves to hoe the cotton at fifty cents per day. On Sundays, he sometimes paid the slaves seventy-five cents, all or part of which they could keep for themselves. When he departed on the

30. Edmund Dana, *Geographical Sketches on the Western Country: designed for emigrants and settlers: being the result of extensive researches and remarks....* (Cincinnati: Looker, Reynolds & Co., 1819), pp. 235, 236.

31. Darby, *A Geographical Description....* p. 106.

32. Dana, *Geographical Sketches....* p. 235.

33. Olmsted, *A Journey Through Texas*, p. 393.



W. H. Sparks

morrow for Opelousas, Olmsted noticed that the soil became increasingly fertile, and concomitantly, there was a greater incidence of extensive cotton plantations worked by "large gangs of negroes." (34)

More than a decade later, Colonel Lockett spoke of the need to attract immigrants to "the prairies of St. Landry," since much of the territory was as yet unsettled by the native population. According to Lockett, "the Creoles of St. Landry" were able to live comfortably "in spite of their little energy and less care." He claimed that the number and quality of livestock on the prairie could be increased at least tenfold under proper scientific management. (35)

The eastern part of the Prairies has a better soil than the farther west, yet even the latter amply repays the laborer for his toil. By manuring, tramping, draining, and deep plowing, the Prairie soil gets better every year that it is cultivated, and may be counted on for making from forty to sixty bushels of corn to the acre. Cotton, cane, and rice may also be raised with profit, and in any desired quantity could undoubtedly be made by enclosing parts of the Prairie and mowing the grass when fresh and juicy. (36)

But it was in the vicinities of Bayous Teche and Lafourche that the Acadian culture reached its apogee in terms of successful plantations, intensive agriculture, architecture and refinement. Perhaps this was also the realm of socio-economic perigee. It is well to remember that Olmsted largely by-passed these areas while Lockett, during his brief visit, spent most of his time among the wealthier segments of the Anglo-American population. Actually, one of the most descriptive accounts written by a visiting outsider was that of W.H. Sparks, a native Georgian and one-time resident of Louisiana. Since he was a friend and confidant of the rich, Sparks was able to contribute an outlander's view of high society and its gracious style of living. The setting was along Bayou Lafourche.

By the 1830s, the French and American sugar planters were husily extending their holdings by purchasing the smaller properties of the *petit habitants*. The subsistence farmer often retired to a lower part of the backslope, where he built his cottage of mud and logs and lived on the available fish, wild game, and garden produce. (37) Between the wealthy planter and the poor farmer—be he of French or American descent—there existed practically no rural middle class:

The contrast between these princely estates, and the palatial mansions which adorn them, and make a home of luxuriant beauty, and the little log huts, their immediate neighbors, tells at once that the population is either very rich or very poor, and that under such circumstances the communication must be extremely limited; for the ignorance of the poor unfits them for social and intelligent intercourse with the more wealthy and more cultivated neighbors. This is true whether the planter is French or American. The remarkable

34. *Ibid.*, p. 405.

35. Post, *Louisiana As It Is*, p. 95.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

37. W.H. Sparks, *The Memories of Fifty Years: Containing Brief Biographical Notices of Distinguished Americans, and Anecdotes of Remarkable Men; Interspersed with Scenes and Incidents Occurring during a Long Life of Observation Chiefly spent in the Southwest* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: E. Claxton & Company, 1882, p. 379.



An Acadian Home,
As Seen by Anglo-American
artist A. R. Waud

salubrity of the climate, combined with the comforts and luxuries of home, causes the planter to spend most of his time there, where he can give his attention to his business and mingle with his brother planters in a style and manner peculiar to Louisiana and the tastes of her people. Intercommunication is facilitated by steamboat travel, and as every plantation is located upon a navigable stream the planter and family can at any time suiting his business go with little trouble to visit his friends, though they may be hundreds of miles apart. Similarity of pursuit and interest draw these together. There is no rivalry, and consequently no jealousy between them. All their relations are harmonious, and their intercourse during the summer is continuous, for at that season the business of the plantation may be safely trusted to a manager, one of whom is found on every plantation.

The social intercourse is highly promotive of a general amity, as it cultivates an intimacy which at once familiarizes everyone with the feelings, situation, and intentions of the other. Sometimes the contiguity of plantations enables the families of planters to exchange formal morning and evening calls, but most generally the distance to be overgone is too great for this. Then the visiting is done by families, and extends to days, and sometimes weeks. Provisions are so abundant that the extra consumption is never missed, and the residences are always of such dimensions that the visitors seem scarcely to increase the family—never to be in the way; and the suits of apartments occupied by them were built and furnished for the purpose to which they are then devoted. The visitor is at home. The character of the hospitality he is enjoying permits him to breakfast from seven till ten, alone, or in company with the family if he chooses. Horses, dogs and guns for the gentlemen—billiards, the carriage, music, or promenading, with cards, chess, backgammon, or dominos for the ladies, to pass away the day until dinner. At this meal the household and guests unite and the rich viands, wines, and coffee make a feast for the body and sharpen the wit to a feast of the soul. This society is the freest and most refined to be found in the country. (38)

Sparks' depiction of the early Acadian settlements was not in keeping with his account of plantation life in the Lafourche area. To begin with, the farmer's family was said to reflect the worst conditions of rural poverty. "Innumerable ragged, half-naked children" gazed at the passing stranger with their "little, black, piercing eyes." Their faces are described as "sallow" and "gaunt," their hair "dishevelled" and "uncombed." Worst of all, "a fallow-faced, slatternly woman," with tangled hair, "bare-footed and bare-legged," was studied as she waded through the mud. (39) The father and husband was caricatured in the following manner:

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 379, 380.

39. *Ibid.*, 374.

A diminutive specimen of a man, clad in blue cottonade pants and hickory shirt, barefooted, with a palm-leaf hat upon his head, and an old rusty shotgun in his hands, stands upon the levee, casting an inquiring look, first up and then down the bayou, deeply desiring and most ardently expecting a wandering duck or crane, as they fly along the course of the bayou. If unfortunately they come within reach of his fusée, he almost invariably brings them down. Then there is a shout from the children, a yelp from the dogs, and all run to secure the game; for too often, 'No duck, no dinner.' Such a home and such inhabitants were to be seen on Bayou La Fourche forty years ago, and even now specimens of the genuine breed may there be found, as primitive as were their ancestors who first ventured a home in the Mississippi swamps. (40)

It is evident that Sparks provided an image of the Acadian farm family of Lafourche in the worst possible light. Nevertheless, his description deserves close scrutiny for it and many others of similar note were disseminated throughout the English-speaking world. Herein lie the roots of a negative propaganda force which has been the bane of the Acadian country for generations. Casual and uncoordinated, the recurrent negativism was never meant to harm the Acadians themselves, but to serve some apparent didactic purpose. The Acadians had refused to conform to the American ethic and value systems; they shunned the popular Victorian strictures of the nineteenth century. Here was a people worthy of pity, and sometimes a good measure of contempt.

40. *Ibid.*

QUERY

The Acadian Village, located in the Alleman Center for Retarded Citizens near Lafayette, is a reconstructed, antebellum, South Louisiana settlement. The directors of the Village are currently soliciting donations of antebellum Acadian furniture for display purposes. Anyone requiring additional information is asked to contact Ed Dauphin, Acadian Village Committee Chairman, at 981-2364.

NAKED HEEL COCKFIGHTS IN ACADIANA

By Kenneth Paul Stewart

Captain L. Fitz-Barnard, whose English family once held the office of Hereditary Marshal of the King's Birds, once wrote, "Cockfighting is the oldest sport in the world." (1) Assuming that Captain Fitz-Barnard was correct, then it follows that naked heel fighting is the oldest form of cockfighting in existence. Indian princes and rajahs have been fighting the Dora Dirza, or nine-fold fight, for thousands of years. The first known mention of cockfighting is in Indian records dated 1000 B.C., but it is probable that the sport flourished long before this date in both India and China. (2)

Louisiana is one of the principal cockfighting areas in the United States. (3) It is one of the few states in which the sport is legal. Naked heel fighting flourishes here, especially in an area encompassing the junction of three southwest Louisiana parishes—Acadia, Lafayette, and St. Landry.

In examining the sport of naked heel fighting in Acadiana, one must consider economic and social factors which shaped the sport's development. In any activity in which more than one person participates, some form of social interaction must occur. This is true of cockfighting. Long before Henry Ford mass produced the car, the cockfighter, or *batailleur des games*, as he was and is called by his French counterparts, would hitch the mule or horse to his wagon or buggy early on Sunday mornings to begin his journey to the local "pit," a sunken arena where cockfights are held.

Cockfighting was not then a family affair. Though fathers and sons were participants, wives and daughters did not usually attend the fights. Male participants usually formed informal partnerships. On the day of the cockfights, the partner residing farthest from the pit would depart with his family and cocks for the home of the nearest partner. Then, both families would travel to the next partner's home where the women and their daughters would be deposited to spend the day gossiping.

The men and boys then continued the journey to the "pit" where the day would be spent drinking beer, gambling on their cocks and those of friends, and arguing over the ability of their respective cocks. In the process of arguing, it was inevitable that matched fights and mains, fights pitting a minimum of three cocks against one-another, would be arranged to decide "definitely" who had the better cocks. The most fascinating aspect of the cockfights was that the cocks were frequently not the only combatants. If the cocks could not decide which partnership owned the better roosters, the men certainly could!

The cockfights usually continued throughout the day, and departure before every cock had been matched and fought was virtually unthinkable. If this meant fighting the smallest cock against the largest, then so be it, as long as all the participants approved the match. After consuming oceans of beer and whiskey, the participants were usually receptive to all proposals. At the end of the day, the fighters—human and fowl—would depart for home, licking their wounds, or celebrating their victory. Before each family reached their respective home, each fight would be fought again at least three times, with each rendition being a little more exciting than the one before. This was a typical day at the fights, which were customarily held between November and July. (4)

Today cockfighting is not limited to the male gender of the human species. Women are now a common sight at cockfights. The sport has become a family affair, with the male participants and spectators bringing their wives and children. Women are even entrusted

1. Captain L. Fitz-Barnard, *Fighting Sports* (London: Odhams Press Limited, n.d.), p. 3.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

3. Jose Maceira, "Cockfighting: An Esoteric Affair," *New Orleans*, VI (May, 1972), 77.

4. James Dala Lantier, Dason, Louisiana. Interviewed by author on September 25, 1973.



A 19th Century Cockfight
(From Harper's Weekly)

with conditioning the cocks. Many women love the sport and often become incensed when they are compelled to miss the fights—especially if their husband is fighting their pet rooster. Because of improved transportation, fights are now held on Friday and Saturday nights and Sundays.

Despite the "modernization" of cockfighting, women pitters are still a thing of the future. Perhaps this is due to the psychological bond between the cocker and his gamecock. Moreover, by allowing a woman to pit his rooster, the male cocker would relinquish one of the few remaining symbols of his masculinity.

In any hobby or sport, participants incur a certain amount of expense; cockfighting is no exception. The majority of fighters before World War II belonged to one of two economic groups: poor subsistence farmers, or prosperous farmer-blue collar workers. The affluent group included those who owned large tracts of land as well as those who owned more modest landholdings in addition to having a full-time, usually blue-collar, job. The less affluent group included farm laborers and small farmers owning only enough land for subsistence purposes. Most of the old cockers belong to the latter group.

The affluent group had considerable advantages over the others. As a rule, this group had the better gamecocks. There are a variety of reasons for this: 1.) these men usually received better wages, or had a higher income from sources other than wages; 2.) due to the nature of their livelihood, they had more leisure time than the other group; 3.) they were generally better educated than the poorer group; 4.) these men could afford better transportation than their less affluent counterparts.

The truism that money buys quality is especially applicable to cock fighting. Those who could afford it, purchased Asil and Spanish fowl, renown for their fighting ability. A cross between these breeds has long been acknowledged as a superior breed of gamefowl.

The care, breeding, and conditioning of gamecocks is expensive and time consuming. A gamecock must be in peak condition at all times to assure that he realizes his full potential. The conditioning of a cock begins from the moment that he emerges from the shell. Poor nutrition and living conditions can ruin an ace cock. Fowl, especially gamefowl, are susceptible to a variety of diseases and parasites. The old affluent cockers had sufficient leisure time to ensure that their cocks remained in peak condition.

This conditioning, similar to the training which an athlete receives before entering competition, is of paramount importance to a successful fighting career. The extra time available to the wealthier cockers enabled them to perfect their cock's conditioning, and even to experiment with many new training techniques.

Education was also an important factor. The affluent cockers tended to be better educated than their poorer counterparts. The former had the opportunity to study the advantages of line-breeding over in-breeding; to learn of new conditioning techniques; to order new, superior breeds, thus enabling them to improve their own gamefowl; and to learn of new feeds and feeding methods, thus ensuring that their cocks would remain in peak condition.

Transportation was another important factor in the development of South Louisiana cockfighting. The transportation revolutions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries enabled the more affluent cockers to obtain birds from other parts of the United States, and sometimes from foreign counties. The automobile had a decided advantage over the mule and wagon. Those owning cars could transport their cocks to the pits faster, thus fatiguing them less. Furthermore, car owners could travel further, talk to more people, see new methods of training and fighting cocks, and secure and introduce new breeds. These factors indicate why the more affluent cockers usually had better cocks, and thus were more successful, than the other group. (5)

The majority of the early cockfighters belonged to the poor group, which was composed primarily of subsistence farmers. These cockers, whose day began at sunrise and ended at sundown, could devote very little time to conditioning, feeding, or breeding gamecocks. Many of these sportsmen failed to devote any time to conditioning their pet roosters. They

simply picked those cocks in best shape, put them in a gunny sack, and departed for the local cockfights.

The quality of the poor cockfighters' birds were consistently inferior to those of their more affluent counterparts. Lacking funds for the purchase of superior Spanish fowl, poor cockers utilized the much cheaper gaff cocks, though they were of an inferior quality. Furthermore, these sportsmen's cocks usually displayed the deleterious effects of extensive inbreeding. In fact, many of these birds could not be considered gamefowl. Thus, it is hardly surprising that they were rarely victorious. (6)

Such was cockfighting prior to the 1950s. With mechanization, the general rise in income and wages, and improved transportation and education, many of the old disadvantages disappeared. Today, all gamecock enthusiasts have good cocks. Some have more than others, but no one group dominates the sport. Everyone wins his share of contests, thus making the sport even more enjoyable for the average man. This is progress, and not even cockfighting is immune to it.

Neither has cockfighting been immune to state laws. It is apparent that in the nineteenth century, Louisiana had no laws against cockfighting. This assumption is drawn from evidence revealing that the sport was matter-of-factly reported by nineteenth century newspapers. (7) Questions concerning the sport's legality were initially raised by the "Cruelty to Animals Law" of 1972. In 1972, however, the Louisiana Supreme Court ruled that the act was not applicable to gamecocks, because they are fowl, whose biological functions are quite different from those of animals. (8)

Before the 1972 supreme court decision, Louisianians generally assumed that cockfighting was illegal; nevertheless, the cockers openly practiced the sport. Local policies regarding cockfighting have traditionally been determined by the parish sheriffs, who were frequently cockfighters. (9)

Because the sport has frequently been opposed by various segments of the public on moral grounds, cockfighters have been compelled to develop a philosophical justification for their activity. The pro-cockfighting arguments can be divided into two groups: 1.) the sanctity of tradition, and 2.) the natural approach.

Tradition has always played an important role in human affairs. It was especially important to the old cockers, of whom many came from families with a long tradition of cockfighting. It was no accident that they also became cockers. Education reinforced this tradition. Many great historical figures, such as Themistocles, Octavius Caesar, Marcus Antonius, Solomon, the Stuart kings, Henry VIII, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln, were practitioners of the sport. (10) If such men enjoyed cockfighting to such a high degree, could other men do less? In this small way, cockers became Washingtons, Jeffersons and Lincolns.

Nature manifests itself in strange ways. The relationship between nature and cockfighting is an interesting one. St. Augustine saw cockfighting as a thing of nature, with a higher form of direction. (11) "One man can put a cock in a pit, but fifty cannot make him fight," wrote Captain L. Fitz-Barnard. (12) This is true. No one can make a cock fight if it has no inclination to do so. In cockfighting, the gamefowl is a willing participant. This is not the case in other sports as hunting or fishing. The object of the cockfight is not the infliction of pain and suffering on the gamefowl; rather, it is admiration of beauty of motion, power, and the desire to win at all costs—even death. Cockfighters are not cruel sadists, but honorable men. They understand their birds, and let nature take its course.

Perhaps the greatest single factor which influenced the development of cockfighting was the introduction of the artificial spur. The early cockers allowed their cocks to grow their

8. Arthur Meyers, Rayna, Louisiana. Interviewed by author on September 21, 1975.

9. Lafayette Daily Advertiser, March 24, 1894; May 11, May 25, 1895; June 13, 1896.

10. Maceira, "Cockfighting," p. 78.

11. Deputy Wilbur Lagar, Acadia Parish Sheriff's Department. Interviewed by author on October 30, 1975.

12. Fitz-Barnard, Fighting, pp. 5-7.

13. Ibid., p. 8.

14. Ibid., p. 11.

own spurs for a period of two to three years before entering them in cockfights. This procedure was not only time consuming, but inefficient. A broken spur could cause a gamecock to lose a fight which it would otherwise win.

Furthermore, some cocks do not develop long spurs, and others lose both spurs (slips spurs) during the course of their lives.

The introduction of the artificially prepared spur revolutionized the cocking sport. Old fighters, out of habit, still preferred the natural maturation process, but the younger cockers took advantage of the greater speed of the younger birds. Thus the latter group enjoyed a great advantage over the older cockers. (13) Speed, not power, became the secret of success in cockfighting. Cocks are now much faster than their counterparts of the 1950s. In most instances, speed is the deciding factor in a fight today.

At this point, it is necessary to apply the above-mentioned factors to Acadiana's cockfighting circuit. Between 1940 and 1965, one group of men dominated the area cockfights. These men, known as the Duhons, consisted of the following members: Ben Duhon, Oda Duhon, Ostan Simon, Sevignee Domingue, Winston Guillot, and "Pip" Doucet.

This group derives its name from the fact that Ben and Oda Duhon were the most visible members at the pit. Ben was the breeder and pitter; Oda was the conditioner. Their associates were their financial backers.

Ben Duhon worked for the University of Southwestern Louisiana Maintenance Department for approximately twenty-seven years. Oda Duhon, now deceased, was a school-bus driver and farmer. Ostan Simon owned and ran a garage in Scott, Louisiana, for many years. Sevignee Domingue was a cattle breeder; "Pip" Doucet received a large inheritance from his family; and Winston Guillot was—and still is—a barber. These men met the criteria of the affluent cockers. They received regular wages; they had abundant leisure time; all, except Sevignee Domingue, could read and write (Domingue preferred to tour the countryside to hand-pick his birds); and all could afford automobiles.

The Duhons launched their cockfighting operations by buying an Asil cock from "Black" Aucoin of Mire. In addition, they ordered two Asil hens from Ben Turner of Texas (an Asil breeder of high repute, now deceased). With this foundation stock, they developed a top quality breed of Asil—"strong as a mule, and game as they came." From John R. Thrasher of Kentucky, they obtained a few Spanish fowl. Many Acadiana cockers still pride themselves in owning pure "Thrasher" Spanish fowl. By crossing these birds, the Duhons developed a hybrid strain that will long be remembered. All of the cocks were deep red, close feathered and had tremendous short, but wide, yellow beaks; hence, these fowl became known as the Duhons' "Yellow Bills." These cocks have earned their place in local folklore. For twenty-five years, without interruption, they were the best gamefowl in southwest Louisiana. (14)

In 1959, another group of men broke the Duhon monopoly. Louis Spell, Preston Smith, and Angelo Pizzolato, all of Crowley, developed a new, superior quality breed. Louis Spell and Preston Smith worked in the oil fields as drillers, made good wages, and had plenty of leisure time. They were the breeders. Angelo Pizzolato, "the Dago," owned a meat market with his brother. He was the conditioner. It was said that he spent nearly all of his time inspecting his cocks to ensure that they were in excellent fighting condition.

To develop their breed, this group acquired an Asil cock from Doctor D.S. Newilly of California. Dr. Newilly originally received his birds from Shahanjapur Province, India in 1932. Two Asil hens were ordered from Ben Turner, the man responsible for the Duhons' past successes. The Spanish fowl were ordered from John R. Thrasher, the Kentucky breeder who had aided the Duhons.

This group broke from the traditional practice of allowing a cock to reach two years of age before submitting them to combat through the use of the postiza, or gaff. Cocks owned by Pizzolato usually received their baptism of fire at the age of nine months. The tradition-bound Duhons, however, continued to fight only two-year-old cocks. The outcome was obvious. Pizzolato's younger, faster cocks were more than a match for the older Duhon birds.

Pizzolato and his partners were less secretive and more cooperative than the Duhons. These men were perfectly willing to help anyone acquire good quality stock. They enjoyed

13. Angelo Pizzolato, Crowley, Louisiana. Interviewed by author on October 19, 1975.

14. Sevignee Domingue, Ostan, Louisiana. Interviewed by author on October 5, 1975.

seeing two superior birds meet in mortal combat. (15) These men, all members of the affluent group, have been instrumental in making cockfighting what it is today--fiercely competitive.

15. Preston Smith, Crowley, Louisians. Interviewed by author on September 13, 1975.

LA FILLE QUI ÉTAIT FIÈRE

Par David Lanclos

Il était un fois une fille qui portait des lunettes. Elle était très fière et elle portait ses lunettes seulement quand elle était seule chez elle. Sans ses lunettes elle ne voyait pas trop bien.

Un bon jour son fiancé est venu chez elle lui rendre visite. Quand la fille l'a aperçu à la porte de la cour elle a mit ses lunettes dans sa poche, car elle était fière.

Elle a invité son fiancé pour aller boire du café dans la cuisine. En entrant dans la cuisine, elle a vu quelque chose de blanc sur la table. Elle avait un vieux chat blanc qui avait l'habitude de monter sur la table et comme elle ne voyait pas bien, elle a raisonné que c'était sans doute son vieux chat blanc qui était monté sur la table. Elle s'est dite, "Il faut que je le chasse d'ici car il va m'embrasser devant mon fiancé."

Elle a prit un balai et lui a donné un grand coup. Mais ce n'était pas du tout son vieux chat blanc; c'était un bol de lait que sa mère avait mit sur la table. Il y avait du lait partout dans la cuisine.

Son fiancé était étonné et il a pensé qu'elle était folle. Mais, il y avait un bal ce soir là et il était venu lui demander d'y aller avec lui.

Son père, qui était dans la chambre à côté, avait entendu ce qui c'était passé. Quand le fiancé fut parti le père y dit à sa fille, "J'ai une idée. Ce soir je mettrai une aiguille sur la porte de la cour, et quand toi et ton fiancé reviendrez du bal tu vas lui dire, 'Regarde, il y a une aiguille sur la porte de la cour.' Il va croire que tu as vraiment bonne vue et il va sans doute te demander en mariage."

Elle a fait comme son père lui avait dit. Le soir quand ils sont revenus du bal, elle a dit à son fiancé, "Regarde, il y a une aiguille sur la porte de la cour." Son fiancé a dit, "Mais moi je ne vois rien." "OUI, OUI," dit la fille, "Viens plus près et je vais te la montrer."

Elle a fait un pas pour aller lui montrer l'aiguille et elle a butté sur une grosse vache qui était couchée devant la porte.

Cela a tellement embarrassé son fiancé qu'il n'est jamais revenu chez elle, et elle est morte de honte.

Alors, mes chers enfants, apprenez une leçon de cette histoire. Ne soyez jamais trop fiers dans la vie.

THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN MEDICINE
IN LAFAYETTE PARISH: 1900-1920

By John F. Parker

The life of the early parish physician was indeed a hard one. Serving a vast rural area, the doctor was often called upon to treat patients thirty miles apart in a single day. Roads were frequently impassable for a horse and buggy, adding further difficulty to the doctor's situation. He usually made his visits on horseback, carrying his medical supplies and equipment with him. A typical doctor's bag contained quinine, cream of tartar, castor oil, opium, laudanum, paregoric, ipecac, Epsom salts, blister plaster, camphor, hartshorn, gum arabic, blue mass and rhubarb mass. His tools consisted of lancets, cups, trepaning knives, perhaps a scarifactor, and, occasionally, leeches.

During the 19th century, surgery was generally performed in the patient's home or at the scene of an accident under less than satisfactory sanitary conditions. Only simple operations such as appendectomies, hysterectomies, herniotomies, and tonsillectomies were performed. The autobiography of John P. Brashears of Livingston Parish, written in the 1890s, presents a rather discouraging picture of rural medicine and its practice. He wrote that, in cases of severe pain, the doctor would blister with a cupping glass. His graphic description of the procedure speaks for itself: "...you'd have to work the glass slowly to get it off, and there'd be a blister as big as the mouth of that glass, and it was supposed to draw the pain out; but, boy, if you busted one of those, you had a mess on your hands, but in a day or two it would dry up." (1) Conversely, the prevalent use of the drug calomel was not entirely the fault of the physician. The general public placed such faith in the drug that any country physician who failed to prescribe its use would have aroused suspicion regarding his medical qualifications in the minds of his patients.

An interesting feature of the period was the factionalism within the medical profession. The allopaths (or osteopaths) were regular doctors who believed in the importance of scientific medical treatment but who were nevertheless responsible for the above-mentioned blister procedure. The homeopaths, on the other hand, believed that physicians should interfere as little as possible with the natural healing capabilities of the human body. Certainly, they would provide medical attention whenever necessary. With regard to administering drugs, however, the homeopaths were in continual disagreement with the allopaths.

In Lafayette Parish, this schism was apparent throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. So intense was their rivalry that it often generated political repercussions. For example, the president of the Southwestern Louisiana Institute (present-day University of Southwestern Louisiana) often found his job in jeopardy whenever he was compelled to select a visiting physician for the college.

1. John P. Brashears, "A Gathering of Stones: The Autobiography of John P. Brashears," pp. 130-132. Manuscript in the possession of David Lewis, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

One may speculate that this professional antagonism resulted in the establishment of two, separately staffed hospitals rather than one central facility. The advent of World War II finally ended this prolonged debate in the area and signalled the formation of the Lafayette Parish Medical Society in 1943.

Because they were isolated from the mainstream of modern medical ideas, many rural physicians were unable to keep pace with major medical discoveries in distant cities — hence the archaic techniques and the diversity of their respective treatments for various diseases. Another problem known to exist in much of Louisiana, though not definitely in the Lafayette area, was the assumption of a doctor's title and responsibilities by persons lacking proper qualifications. In 1902, the corresponding secretary of the Louisiana State Medical Society reported a total of 126 registered physicians lacking medical diplomas. (2)

The state's efforts to eradicate these "quacks" were thwarted by the general public; because physicians were in such great demand, the unlicensed practitioners' fines were willingly paid by their patients. In some cases, "quacks" were totally ignored. As a related problem, medical personnel had to contend with the efforts of well-meaning relatives and friends who frequently dispensed overdoses of family and patent medicines to ill and trusting friends.

In response to the large number of unqualified doctors practicing in the state, the legislature passed a licensing act in 1894. The examining board created by the act had some initial success, but by 1908, politics and favoritism were playing too great a role in determining members of the board. Acting upon a joint proposal from the Louisiana Medical Society, the medical school, and the state board of health, the legislature passed the licensing law of 1908. Among other things, the new law required each candidate for a medical license to hold a diploma from an accredited medical college and to pass an examination in ten fields of medicine, including such subjects as anatomy, physiology, chemistry, obstetrics, and so forth. (3) In succeeding years, this medical practice act was periodically revised and strengthened and by 1920, the medical licensing laws were generally enforced, and the caliber of Louisiana physicians was greatly improved.

Probably the most glaring inadequacy of the medical profession in Lafayette at the turn of the century was the absence of hospitals and laboratories. Without proper facilities, local physicians were unable to perform complicated surgery and the serious cases were sent to New Orleans for treatment. Though Lafayette lacked resident specialists, several circulating practitioners visited the community occasionally, usually after advertising their arrival in the *Lafayette Advertiser*. Because of the dearth of specialists, local doctors doubled as dentists.

In 1906, three doctors, L. O. Clark and J. Franklin Mouton of Lafayette and Dr. L.A. Prejean of Scott, organized the Lafayette Sanatorium as a private corporation. By 1911, the hospital had become a reality. Having acquired a site on St. John Avenue (300 feet frontage by 600 feet depth) for \$2,500, the partnership opened a small building with six beds. The first few years were marked by the capable leadership of these three doctors. They were subsequently joined by Doctors M.E. Saucier and C.E. Hamilton. These first years of the hospital's existence were marked by a lamentable shortage of medical equipment.

In January 1913, J.A. Landry, president of the Louisiana Power and Traction Company, donated an x-ray machine to the Sanitarium. (4) The presentation of this \$600 instrument closely preceded a municipal vote on establishing a trolley system for the city in which

2. "Report of the Corresponding Secretary." *Transactions of the Louisiana State Medical Society* (New Orleans, 1902), pp. 18-19.

3. *Acts Passed by the General Assembly...1908* (Baton Rouge, 1908), pp. 361-364.

4. *The Lafayette Advertiser*, January 5, 1913.

Landry's company played a prominent role. Dr. Clark was the first parish physician to utilize the new x-ray machine. He was also the first physician to perform a Caesarian section in Lafayette.

By August 1913, the hospital had been expanded to 14 beds and had increased its staff accordingly. Costs were \$17.50 per week for a semi-private room and \$21 per week for a private room.

The first eye, ear, nose, and throat clinic was opened by Dr. F. E. Girard in late 1910. He continued to operate the clinic, located in a frame building on Lafayette Street, very near the Lafayette Parish Courthouse, for several years. (5)

On March 7, 1914, several Lafayette doctors filed a charter for the Attakapas Cooperative Sanitarium. (6) Its officers included: Dr. J.D. Trahan, president; Dr. F. R. Tolson, first vice president; Dr. E.E. Guilbeau, second vice president; Dr. F.E. Girard, treasurer; and Dr. M.M. Mouton, secretary. Others later associated with the cooperative included Doctors R.D. Voorhies and O.P. Daly, a reputable surgeon. The Attakapas Sanitarium opened its doors to the public on April 14, 1914, in Dr. Tolson's former home (1108 Johnston Street). Its facilities included eight bedrooms for whites and six for blacks, with one black and one white quarantine room. Three years later, this hospital was damaged by fire and the Attakapas Sanitarium was moved to the building formerly occupied by Dr. Girard's eye, ear, nose and throat clinic.

The establishment of the first hospitals in Lafayette coincided with a state-wide increase in the number of medical facilities. By 1914, medical institutions had been erected in Paterson, Bogalusa, Crowley, Mansfield, and Lecompte.

Prior to 1900, epidemic diseases such as yellow fever and malaria had been synonymous with Louisiana. A municipal ordinance in 1895 established quarantine procedure to defend Lafayette from the onslaught of epidemic diseases. Under the terms of the ordinance, the mayor or president of the city council determined whether or not any residence or municipal area was infected with a contagious disease and required quarantine. (7) Glaring in its omission is any mention of a local health board or a local health official. In fact, neither was established in Lafayette until the dawn of the 20th century.

The last major epidemic to strike Lafayette was the yellow fever attack of 1905. Fortunately, in 1905, Dr. L.O. Clark arrived from New Orleans bringing knowledge of the measures taken by the Crescent City to conquer the contagion. By widespread use of these anti-mosquito techniques and through the heroic efforts of local physicians, Lafayette was able to survive the threat with a minimum of fatalities. Thus 1905 marked a turning point in Lafayette's medical history. For the first time, the light of science had penetrated the community and benefited public welfare.

Unfortunately for the Lafayette residents, however, as the threat of the mosquito-borne diseases diminished, the threat of a smallpox epidemic grew proportionately large. Following the Civil War, there had been a steady increase in the number of people not taking part in the smallpox immunization process. The rising incidence of the virus was generally unheeded until a program of compulsory vaccination was begun by state and local health officials in 1900. By the end of World War I, the smallpox problem was considered under control even

5. The Lafayette Advertiser, March 10, 1914.

6. The structure is still standing and is presently a rooming house.

7. Lafayette Ordinances. (Lafayette, La., 1895), p. 25.

though there still existed a large reservoir of non-immunes in some rural areas. (8) Occasional outbreaks of endemic diseases such as influenza, tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, and leprosy in Lafayette reflected the absence of an effective, statewide public health program.

In 1910, the state board of health, under the direction of Dr. Oscar Dowling, instituted a massive campaign of public health reform. One of the most notable aspects of this movement was the utilization of the Health Train, whose purpose was the education of the public regarding personal hygiene and sanitation as well as to inspect local establishments for health code infractions. On March 21, 1911, this train stopped in Lafayette and was greeted by an enthusiastic crowd. (9) By using this method, Dr. Dowling was able to educate thousands of citizens on the importance of public health care.

Furthering the education of physicians was of paramount importance to the improvement of the quality of medical practice. The emergence of local medical societies as well as the increased effectiveness of the State Medical Society served this function in that meetings generally consisted of discussion on several new and controversial procedures. In the Lafayette area, the Attakapas Medical Society was formed to benefit and instruct its members in their profession. (10) Its members included those physicians living along the Southern Pacific Railroad system.

Aside from their function of maintaining the high level of expertise among its members, these societies also gained increasing influence and interest in Louisiana's health. While space does not permit a summary of the many activities of the state and parish societies, it should be pointed out that all of the organizations actively promoted state/local health boards, supported pure food and drug laws, all health regulations, and constantly sought to raise professional standards. (11)

The young physician practicing in Lafayette in 1920 had every reason to bask in the light of optimism. The last twenty years had seen the successful application of the mosquito theory of malaria and yellow fever; the presence of x-ray equipment which enabled him to make diagnoses with far more accuracy; the development of serum treatments for such diseases as diphtheria, cholera, tuberculosis, and tetanus; and the erection and expansion of the city's first medical facilities. While more backward physicians still clung to the older medical practices, the caliber of Louisiana doctors was steadily improving, and younger physicians were rapidly applying new techniques, information, and therapeutics in their daily practice.

By end of World War I, it was evident that Lafayette medical practice had lost many of the characteristics which had formerly differentiated it from medicine as it was practiced elsewhere in the country. Diseases such as malaria continued to linger in the southern states, but by raising the general health standard, these diseases were gradually eliminated.

By 1920, despite a few minor variations arising from cultural and climactic factors, scientific medicine and mass communication had virtually standardized American medicine. Thus, in the process, medical practice in Lafayette, like its counterparts in other states, was brought into conformity with the national norm.

8. John Duffy, *History of Medicine in Louisiana* (Binghamton, N.Y., 1962), p. 443.

9. *The Lafayette Advertiser*, March 21, 1911.

10. *Ibid.*, April 25, 1911.

11. Hathaway Gibbens Allen, ed., *Rudolph Matas History of the Louisiana State Medical Society*, 2 vols. (New Orleans, 1957), II, 82-87.

LES COUTUMES DE NOCES ACADIENNES

Par Larry Eugene Romero

Chaque civilisation a une génération qui est unique et tant soit peu différente de toutes les autres. Mais il faut quand même remarquer les liens avec la tradition. Et pour mieux accomplir cela, il faut qu'on examine le folklore.

Dans les vieux temps, on ne trouvait pas les objets de luxe qu'on a aujourd'hui. La plupart de nos ancêtres acadiens qui se sont établis à St. Martinville étaient des métayers. Ils étaient pauvres. Alors, il fallait qu'ils fassent le mieux possible avec ce qu'ils avaient. Cela se voit bien dans leurs coutumes.

Les années pendant lesquelles les jeunes gens se courtoisaient étaient bien surveillées. Quand un jeune homme s'intéressait à une jeune fille, en général vers l'âge de quatorze ou quinze ans, sa mère habillait un épi de maïs en poupée. Il l'offrait à la jeune fille qu'il voulait courtiser en signe de son amitié pour elle. C'était le premier cadeau qu'il lui faisait.

Les jeunes filles dansaient toujours ensemble. Mais à l'âge de treize ou quatorze ans, une jeune fille commençait à aller au bal. Les parents ou un adulte qui prenait la responsabilité amenait la jeune fille à la salle. Si elle devait rencontrer un jeune homme au bal, il devait l'attendre à la porte. Elle lui donnait la première danse d'abord, toutes les trois danses ensuite, et finalement la dernière. Le garçon pouvait inviter la jeune fille au bar pour une boisson gazeuse ou une tasse de café. Après le bal il pouvait l'accompagner jusqu'à la voiture ou à la barouche s'ils étaient accompagnés par les parents. Souvent les parents restaient au bal pour attendre les jeunes. Une fois dans la salle de danse les jeunes ne pouvaient pas sortir jusqu'à la fin. Voilà la morale.

A ce moment dans la vie d'une jeune fille sa mère commençait à lui enseigner l'art de faire la cuisine, de broder, de piquer des couvertures, et de coudre. C'est maintenant qu'elle commençait son trousseau.

Les membres de la famille étaient presque toujours unis. Les jeunes respectaient leurs parents et leur autorité. On le voit dans le contrôle que les parents exerçaient sur le choix des enfants. Par exemple, quand un jeune homme voulait courtiser une jeune fille, il demandait la permission des parents. Même s'ils avaient la permission de se courtiser, ils doivent avoir un rendez-vous avec quelqu'un d'autre. Seulement leurs fiançailles pouvaient changer cela.

Quand un jeune homme voulait se marier, il fallait demander le consentement des parents. Avant que les parents approuvent le mariage, le jeune homme devait prouver qu'il était bon travailleur et qu'il était capable d'entretenir sa famille.

Quand le jeune couple annonçait ses fiançailles, le garçon envoyait un certain somme d'argent soit à la Nouvelle Orléans ou en France pour une corbeille de noce. Ce cadeau était le signe de leurs fiançailles et faisait partie du trousseau de la fiancée. D'habitude on y trouvait des choses comme un éventail, de la dentelle, une jarettièrre, un mouchoir brodé, ou une lavière (une chaîne). Aujourd'hui la corbeille de noce est remplacée par une bague.

Quand la noce approchait, la famille de la fille prenait une couverture bleue avec une étoile à carreaux dans le centre sur la galerie ou sur la barrière. Comme il n'y avait pas moyen d'envoyer des invitations écrites, on annonçait la noce. Le couple allait inviter personnellement les grands-parents, les oncles et les tantes, les cousins, et leurs amis.

Quelques semaines avant les noces le jeune homme, la jeune fille, et la mère de la fille allaient choisir les vêtements de la mariée. D'habitude on achetait de l'étoffe pour la robe de noce et les sous-vêtements qui étaient tous faits à la main. Quelque fois on réussissait

à acheter une robe toute faite, mais c'était rare car ça coûtait si cher. Il fallait que le jeune homme paye les vêtements, et comme il n'avait pas beaucoup d'argent, il fallait qu'il économise le peu d'argent qu'il avait réussi à gagner. Souvent la robe de noce était faite d'une manière simple pour qu'elle puisse être modifiée pour être portée plus tard. La jeune fille portait un petit voile de chapelle ou un grand voile fait avec une moustiquaire très fine bordée de dentelles qu'on appelait une "bobinette." Elle portait aussi un chapelet et un livre de messe blanc (si le livre de messe était noir, on le couvrait avec une belle étoffe blanche). Plus tard, quand on a appris à faire les fleurs en papier, la mariée portait un bouquet.

En général, le jeune homme avait un complet de couleur sombre. Autrement, il en empruntait un d'un cousin ou d'un ami. Il devait seulement acheter une paire de gants noirs qu'il mettait ce jour là.

Le jour de la noce chacune des deux familles faisait un grand déjeuner chez elle pour leur parenté. D'habitude on mettait des tables faites avec des planches posées sur des tréteaux et couvertes de draps dans la cour sous les arbres. On célébrait avec une boucherie, des gâteaux faits à la maison, et du vin.

Le mariage prenait place tard l'après-midi. Alors, après le déjeuner le jeune homme et sa famille se préparaient et allaient chez la fille pour la rencontre des mariés et leur demoiselle d'honneur et leur garçon d'honneur répétaient l'entrée et la sortie de l'église. Ils ne pouvaient pas répéter la veille comme on le fait maintenant. De là ils allaient tous ensemble à l'église avec les mariées dans une voiture à la tête de la procession pour que la poussière ne salisse pas la robe de la mariée. Une fois à l'église, les mariés rentraient les premiers et puis venaient le garçon et la demoiselle d'honneur, les parents, la parenté, et la foule. On suivait le même les moyens de jeter du riz à la sortie.

Quand la mariée avait mis son alliance, on se réunissait tous chez la mariée pour la collation. Il y avait deux tables mises dans la cour. Une, c'était la table de la mariée avec le gâteau de noce blanc au milieu entouré d'autres gâteaux de différentes sortes-tous faits à la maison, des pralines, et du punch. Sur la table du garçon on trouvait un gâteau au chocolat, du vin, de l'anisette, des pêches à l'eau de vie, de la liqueur de cerise, et d'autres boissons.

D'habitude, un couple ne pouvait pas se marier le samedi pour deux raisons. Premièrement, le prêtre refusait de célébrer la cérémonie un samedi parce qu'il aurait perdu la moitié de sa congregation le dimanche. Ils ne pourraient pas se lever assez tôt pour assister à la messe après avoir passé toute la nuit à boire et à danser.

L'autre raison était qu'après la collation, on faisait toujours un bal de noce. Alors, le propriétaire de la salle de danse n'aimait pas faire un bal de noce le samedi soir parce qu'il aurait perdu trop d'argent. Pour mieux comprendre il faut examiner ce qui se passait à un bal de noce. On faisait payer à la porte et la somme obtenue était donnée aux mariés. Les mariés dansaient la première valse. Pour la seconde danse personne ne dansait. On passait le chapeau pour faire une quête pour les mariés. Comme on ne donnait pas de "showers" et ni de cadeau de mariage, la quête remplaçait les cadeaux. La troisième danse les mariés dansaient avec leurs parents. Si un jeune homme se mariait avant un frère qui était plus âgé, il fallait que le plus vieux danse pieds nus pendant tout le bal.

Il était rare qu'on aille en lune de miel. Donc après un peu de temps au bal, les mariés partaient chez eux ou bien souvent chez les parents, avec qui ils allaient habiter jusqu'à ce qu'ils puissent se loger. Voilà les coutumes que les jeunes suivaient pour devenir homme et femme.

OPELOUSAS AND THE COMING OF THE RAILROAD

By Elizabeth Talbot

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the United States experienced rapid railroad expansion. Railroads held the promise of future glory, recognition, prosperity, and hope for rural towns and villages. As a consequence, many agricultural communities such as Opelousas, utilized any means to gain access to the burgeoning rail system; however, the monopolistic companies which serviced these new railroad towns frequently failed to meet the expectations of the local inhabitants. Such was the case at Opelousas in the early 1880s.

Opelousas' campaign to secure rail connections with the Crescent City, the South's commercial center, began in 1852, when the New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railroad Company was established. Rails were laid to Brashear City (present-day Morgan City) by 1858. Further development of the Great Western line, however, was disrupted by the Civil War, several proprietary changes, bankruptcies, and yellow fever epidemics. Nevertheless, in 1878, work on the railroad was resumed.

The Morgan Company, which acquired the Great Western Railroad in 1879, extended the line from Morgan City to Opelousas by 1881, thus completing the original, anticipated route of the New Orleans, Opelousas, and Great Western Railroad.

The coming of the railroad signified a new era of prosperity for the residents of southwestern Louisiana. Every city, town, and village along the railroad line saw a future of golden opportunity and growth, and Opelousas was no exception.

Because of its inland location and the primitive condition of the local road system, much of Opelousas' commercial activity was confined to the neighboring parishes. On the other hand, produce had to be transported by the timely and costly route to Washington and from there by steamboat to New Orleans. Mail was sent and received in the same manner. Due to the inefficiency of this method, the discontent of the local businessmen was often voiced in the local newspapers. To add to these vexations, when the water was low, no steamboats could reach Washington and, therefore, commerce and the mails came to a halt. Thus, it is not surprising that the approach of the railroad created excitement and anticipation among the residents of Opelousas.⁽¹⁾

A new means of rapid and certain transportation and communication was to be theirs. Distances were to be split in half and the outside world would be within their grasp. Fear of the extortionate rates charged elsewhere by railroad monopolies was non-existent because Opelousians were certain that water communication would provide sufficient competition to keep rates at a moderate level. In short, the proponents of the railroad felt that Opelousas had everything to gain and nothing to lose by the arrival of the life-giving locomotive.

Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad reached Opelousas in 1880 with the first passenger trains arriving on October 15. The freight trains followed on November 18. Opelousas was finally connected with New Orleans.

Within a year of the first train's arrival, numerous complaints about the high rates of Morgan's line began to appear in the local newspapers. The increase in the regular rates from three cents per mile to five cents per mile was considered exorbitant by the Opelousas townspeople. Comparing Morgan's rates with those of the Louisiana Western Railroad which ran between Vermilionville and Orange, Texas, one editor complained:

1. In 1880, Opelousas had a population of 1687. *Census Population Schedules, 1880.*

Why can't that sordid monopoly, Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad, be induced to offer similar advantages to the people of the parishes through which it passes? (2)

With regard to the rapid transportation which was to save time and money and whose rates were to have been kept reasonable by steamboat competition, many merchants apparently preferred slower service with lower rates—at least where nonperishable goods were concerned. An article in the local newspaper complained that Morgan's line charged \$1.50 to ship a barrel of pecans to New Orleans, while the steamboats charged only fifty cents. "Quite a difference, eh! Well it is the same difference in many other things, in the charges of the railroad and the boats. Comment is unnecessary." (3)

The railroad was also expected to bring industry to utilize local resources and wealth of the prairies of St. Landry which had long stood idle. The progressive and materialistic spirit of the age was strongly voiced by leading citizens of Opelousas, especially by the editor of the *Opelousas Courier*:

In three or four weeks the railroad will be finished to Opelousas. Then, we will have daily and rapid transit with commercial circles, and with our sister States; businessmen will be visiting the large and fertile domain of St. Landry with the view of securing her trade, or for the purpose of locating permanently with us. (4)

Industry was invited into the area and merchants were told to advertise, to give their buildings a face-lift and to improve their merchandise. A growing awareness of self-image was appearing and the press admonished local merchants when they slumped into lethargy and congratulated them when they expanded their businesses preparatory to the opening of the railroad. Viewing themselves as the voice of the town, the editors of the *Courier* naturally expected to grow along with it and often expressed the hope of obtaining the patronage of New Orleans merchants.

The hopes of a promising future, fostered by the railroad, served as a magic elixir, which rejuvenated the vital forces of Opelousas; however, the failure of the outside world to immediately fulfill the town's expectations foreshadowed the death of these forces. Prior to the completion of the rail line, several new buildings were erected and many old ones were whitewashed. Moreover, the number of advertisements in the *Opelousas Courier* increased, but it failed to become a daily paper as anticipated. Opelousas merchants frequented New Orleans shops to obtain better merchandise. An opera house, a lumber yard, a broom factory, an ice house, and two cotton seed oil mills were established, and telegraph service was improved after Western Union bought the small local office. The majority of the improvements which resulted from the impetus of the railroad were actually perpetuated by citizens of Opelousas in their sporadic moments of industry. They could have been effectively established without the railroad if local leadership had taken the initiative. Several accounts of strangers arriving in the community for business purposes appeared in the *Courier*, but these individuals were usually involved in wild schemes which seldom amounted to anything.

2. Abbeville Meridional, December 18, 1880.

3. *Opelousas Courier*, November 12, 1881.

4. *Ibid.*, August 14, 1880.

The Opelousians' major concern appears to have been immigration. Not only local newspapers, but those of New Orleans and others throughout the country began to emphasize the fertility and beauty of the Louisiana territory and its need for immigration. According to these articles, immigration was the single most important obstacle in the path of the South's development. Opelousas wanted the rapid growth which the railroad was sure to bring.

Glowing descriptions of St. Landry Parish appeared in real estate journals, letters, and editorials of the various newspapers. Speaking of Opelousas in March 1881, *Waldo's Directory* stated:

...beautifully located, exceedingly healthy, and susceptible of being made one of the most important of our rural cities. It has large and fertile country to supply, and from which, with the introduction of capital and energy, it must inevitably reap a large benefit.... In line, with location of great beauty, back country of great resources, nearness to water communication, and a railroad complete, ...intelligent and polished society, we feel warranted in asserting that no locality in the Southern States combines more...inducements as are here to people of all classes to come and make their home.(5)

St. Landry Parish was repeatedly referred to as the "poor man's country" because it offered so much to those who were willing to supply the industry and energy.

In order to encourage immigration to St. Landry Parish, a proponent of the railroad, using the pseudonym "Irishman," published articles in local newspapers and applied his seemingly boundless energy to the subject of immigration by keeping regular correspondence with the New Orleans papers and with the State Bureau of Immigration and by rallying support at home. This was not an original idea, as such organizations were prevalent throughout the South. Opelousians as a whole, however, were often lax in their efforts to promote immigration and wasted time in mere speculation. Meanwhile, Vermilionville had formed an immigration society by the middle of 1880 and had advised others to do likewise. Although numerous residents urged their fellow townspeople to emulate their southern neighbors, a community meeting to discuss the matter was not held until May 9, 1881. A second meeting was held on June 29, 1881, and a subcommittee was established, but this committee was negligent in its efforts to form an immigration society. The responsibility of providing information to prospective immigrants was passed from one local group to another. Local leaders dominated positions of influence, but failed to use them effectively. Thus, by the end of 1881, little had been accomplished.

As a consequence, when an agent acting for Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas went to Europe to establish immigration agencies, he did so without necessary information from St. Landry Parish.

As a result of the speculation concerning the railroad and its effect on immigration, the landowners of St. Landry Parish entered the market with extravagant expectations. The avarice of landowners, especially those residing along the projected railroad route, was constantly pointed out as one of the major hindrances to immigration. It seems that the greater portion of land was held by large property owners who were unwilling to divide their holdings, thus making it difficult for immigrants of moderate means to purchase land.

There were other hindrances to immigration. Numerous comments were made about the absence of free public schools in Opelousas. Private schools were available, but those seeking new homes claimed that they could not afford them and, therefore, usually went on to Texas.

5. *Ibid.*, March 26, 1881.

In 1881, two new public schools were constructed, but they were generally condemned because there were no separate male schools. In addition, Opelousas' efforts to attract immigrants were hindered by the northern fear of being unwelcome in the South. Because of their Republican background, many northern immigrants expressed fear that they would not be allowed freedom of speech and that their families would be harmed.

Since the newspapers strongly supported immigration, it is not surprising that little was printed concerning contrary opinions. But, from the tone and content of many of the articles expressing favorable opinions about immigration, negative feelings appear to have existed. Comments refuting the fear that immigration might destroy the vast prairie lands and hurt the cattle business indicate that the cattlemen of the area were members of the opposition. Numerous articles demonstrate the presence of such resistance.

For 100 years the national government has spoken across the seas and called to the people of every nationality to come to our shores and help subdue the wildness of nature to the tamedness and submission of peaceful agriculture. Any man who puts himself in opposition to such progress must be swept away as by a passing train.(6)

Thus, with opposition, lack of educational facilities, northern suspicion of the South, and general apathy on the part of many Opelousas residents, the dreams of growth and material prosperity never realized the exaggerated expectations that were produced by the prospects of the railroad.

The dreams which were fostered by the coming of the railroad can be contrasted to the disillusionment of the town upon realizing that it was not the terminus of the rail line, but an insignificant point on the line connecting two larger points. The following statement, printed in the *Opelousas Courier* on January 1, 1882, reflects the growing despair of the populace and foreshadowed the end of the dreams which had been fostered by the approaching railroad only two years before.

It seems to be yesterday that the year 1881 dawned upon us with all the golden expectations which are usually accorded, by hope, to the future. Yet, like a dream, its days have vanished and in a few more short hours it will be consigned to the tomb of ages, past and gone...yet it has left an indelible imprint of its events upon our lives.... Many visions of joy, of happiness and of better things were pointed in pleasant perspective upon the curtains of its scenic stage, but like the mirage upon a desert waste to the weary traveller, many of them faded away as phantoms to show skeletons, hid by the glamour of the illusion. (7)

6. *Ibid.*, August 6, 1881.

7. *Ibid.*, December 31, 1881.

A SUMMER ON A LOUISIANA
COTTON PLANTATION, 1832*By Amelia Watts*

[Editor's Note: Mrs. Watts' memoirs can be found in the Paul Debaillon collection, Box 5, Folio k, Southwestern Archives, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, Louisiana. This manuscript has been printed without alterations.]

There were five of us; two sisters older than I, and two small brothers, and I was six years old.

We were to spend the summer with our grandparents, all of whose large family with the exception of one son and one daughter, had married and settled not far away. Uncle William was still at College, and Aunt Clara was still at home and about nineteen years old.

Our father and mother had taken her with them to the North, and after having seen the principal cities, were to select one for our new home. Our father was a Scotchman and never liked owning slaves; so having retired from business, he determined to move to a free state for bringing up his children; and he and our mother, having liberated their servants, had gone, leaving us on our grandfather's plantation in St. Landry Parish.

Our grandfather was Judge Seth Lewis, having been appointed by Governor Claiborne in 1812, when Louisiana was admitted as one of the United States. When a young man he had studied law in Nashville, in the office of Andrew Jackson, afterwards President of the United States. He had been appointed Attorney General for the Territory of Mississippi while still a young man and on the admission of that State to the Union had drawn up most of the State laws, and his portrait now hangs in the Court of Honor in the State House in Jackson.

Soon after he had bought a plantation in Louisiana, but he never gave up the law, and as I said was appointed District Judge in 1812.

Behold us then, one bright spring morning up the great piazza and imagine the delight of our city-bred eyes when we saw the great enclosure round the house, shaded by beautiful Southern trees, and beyond the big gate the noble avenues of live oaks which bounded the cotton fields, now in bloom, and looking like interminable rows of white, pink and yellow hollyhocks.

A negro boy brought around our grandfather's gig, which looked like a buggy on two wheels, and after pleasant good-byes to all, he got in and drove off down the avenue on his way to his office in Opelousas where he was to hold court that day.

Then grandma came out, followed by Sophy, who carried a basket of keys, and we all ran down the steps to go with her on her morning rounds.

When my grandfather bought his Louisiana plantation there was on it a large double log house which had been a fort during the war with the Indians, and it was called Camp Hamilton; he retained the name, and as the house was built of strong magnolia logs and was almost indestructible, he had the old building enclosed by a wood casing and added to it at the back; so that when I first saw it, it was a large old-fashioned double house, three rooms deep, and with a wide hall in the center, and porches at the back and front. The upper floor was in two great rooms, with dormer windows on each side. There was a wine cooler in the dining room which was a beauty. It was of fine old mahogany, octagon in shape with a wide brass band around the middle, and a heavy brass ring in the center of the cover; it stood on claw feet. It was lined with zinc with a space between the zinc and the wood, as ice-chests are made now.

The fireplaces were for wood fires, and there were very handsome brass andirons and fenders. In summer there was always a jar of water in the fireplaces, filled with branches of Cape Jasmine.

In the time of which I am writing the house-servants wore dresses of the blue and white cotton homespun made on the place, and always a guily colored head handkerchief which they arranged with much skill, and which had a very picturesque effect. All negro women wore these head handkerchiefs. They were of very fine cotton, woven in plaids of gay colors and never faded in washing.

There were several servants who waited on the table, and my grandfather's body servant, Uncle Lea always stood back of his chair and poured the wine. Claret was always drunk with an equal quantity of water. Uncle Lea had special care of his master, and always accompanied him when he held court in other parishes. They always went on horseback, and Uncle Lea packed the saddle bags, took care of the horses, shaved his master, took care of his clothes and assisted him in dressing. Naturally he fell heir to all of grandpa's discarded clothing, and it was hard to say which had more personal dignity.

On all plantations, as soon as the crop was made, the negroes had a grand feast; the table was loaded with turkeys, pigs and chickens, with quantities of custards and cakes; and at the head of this table Uncle Lea presided and for that evening was addressed as Judge Lewis.

He grew old in my grandfather's service, and by his will was set free, with a good house to live in, on the place; and he made enough money in his old age to buy his wife, to whom he had been faithful for years, and they lived together for some years before Uncle Lea died. All the Lewis family respected and loved Uncle Lea.

In those days things were on a lavish scale. At the table there was always a ham at the mistress's end of the table, with chickens or a turkey or a roast, often of venison, at the master's place; half a dozen kinds of vegetables, and constant relays of the most delicious oval hoe-cakes of cornmeal, about half an inch thick, with a crust like golden brown satin. There were also relays of perfect Virginia biscuits, so well kneaded that the edges cracked open. When there was company there were always two table-cloths put on the table, and before the dessert the top tablecloth was folded over and taken off, instead of using a crumb-brush. Then the glass-stands were put on, and the glasses of floating*island and syllabub or whipped cream, as well we call it now; with frosted cake and pudding or pie before the mistress for her to serve; wine and liquors in small glasses, and black coffee in tiny cups.

Everybody was gay and life was happy. A favorite way of entertaining was to give breakfast parties.

The only light we had was from candles, either sperm or tallow, the latter being made on the place. There were many silver and brass candlesticks, which were kept very bright; and then tall glass candle-shades, handsomely cut, and a yard high; so that sperm candles in tall silver candlesticks would not be blown out by the wind. Everybody had these shades, some of them being plain glass, others very handsome.

It was customary when a gentleman called for the master of the house to invite him to the sideboard, where there were always decanters of sherry, madeira and brandy; and when ladies called they were always served with cake and wine.

In cases of illness friends helped each other to nurse, as there were no nurses except the sisters of charity, whom you could only get in cities. There were always good nurses among the servants, but it was necessary to have a lady to superintend.

The negro men who were too old to work in the fields, could work in the garden or drive the mules in the gin-house, or make split hickory baskets for picking cotton, or chairs for the cabins or the porches.

The cotton-gin was run by horse-power, the gin-house being two stories high; the lower floor looked like a circus-ring; there was a boxed-in screw in the center and a long strong beam extending to the outside of the rings, to which were harnessed the two mules; and a man walked and drove these mules all day. The gin was on the second floor, and the cotton was fed into it by hand; and as the seeds were separated from the cotton, they slid down a trough to the ground outside; while through a glass case as large as a cotton bale, the cotton fell like snow; and when enough had fallen to make a bale it was compressed by a screw, also run by horse-power; then tied by ropes and sewed into a cover of bagging.

In the great yard there were houses for different purposes. In one of these women sat and carded the cotton into long reels, and other women spun these rolls into thread; then there was a loom house where a woman sat and wove the cloth for the clothing of all the negroes on the plantation. Some of the threads were dyed blue or brown, and when woven into checks or stripes it looked like heavy gingham.

There was a large store-house where rows of hams and shoulders hung from beams overhead, and there were rows of tubs holding pickled pork and corned beef, and long rows of nine-pound loaves of white sugar sent by the commission merchant from New Orleans; with sundry boxes and cases, barrels of flour, cases of olive oil and wines, brandy and other things without number, so that there seemed provision to feed an army.

Then there was a house where women cut out and sewed all that was needed for the negroes, so many suits for winter and so many for summer, for every man, women and child; all this was under the supervision of the mistress of the plantation.

On this particular morning we went first to the store-house, where women waited with large wooden trays for the different supplies for the day. The cook for the white family, the cook for the field hands, the cook for the nurses and children who were in their care while their mothers were in the field; and the cook for those who were sick. All these supplies had to be weighed out and distributed.

Then we went to the kitchen, about fifty feet back of the main house, where winter and summer the enormous open fireplace with its huge back log and its crane ready for the iron pots awaited Mum Jinny, who presided with an iron rule over her three assistants; two of them were preparing vegetables at a long table and another was picking chickens.

Mum Jinny kept a stout hickory switch and there was order in her department. Two of the girls were her grand-daughters, the children of Sophy—they were Celeste and Jeanette: I have forgotten the name of the other, but after the dinner was served and the dishes washed and put away, Mum Jinny let them play with us under the trees while she took her nap until time to get supper.

It has been many years ago, and I have seen many things in my life, but never have I eaten such waffles, such wafers and such Virginia biscuits; such fried chicken and such baked ham, as came from Mum Jinny's kitchen. It seems to me the art of cooking died when Mum Jinny and her generation passed away.

After grandma had interviewed Mum Jinny we went down to the quarters to see an old man who had rheumatism in his legs, and found him sitting in a split-bottomed rocking chair, before a fire, although the weather was hot. Grandma said to him, "Well, Uncle Mark, how is your rheumatism to-day? I have brought you Miss Amelia's children to see your snakes." The old man chuckled and said, "Well, dere day is, hanging in the chimblly; I skin 'em and some 'em and Lord, but dey is good, better'n any chicken. And Dese is Miss Melia's children, dey sure is a purty bunch and dey kin sey my snakes all dey wants to."

My sister, Fanny, was at that time nine years old and already showed herself the strong character which she later developed. She was during that summer like a little mother to me and to Seth, aged four, and Pat, not quite two; and both the boys called her Ma Fan; we minded her implicitly. She was very small for her age and had fine large brown eyes, and she looked straight at the old man and said "Uncle Mark, how can you catch snakes, when you can't walk?" There was an embarrassed pause for a moment, but he answered, "Why, you see, Miss Fanny, I has good days and bad days, and on de good days when I goes snakin', I takes dis here stick wid de fork at de end, and when I sees a snake a' spread out and sunnin' hissef I cr-e-e-p up and cr-e-e-e-ups up, and all at once 'Ker-chunk', I gets him just back of the head and I chips it off in a wink." Everybody laughed and we left him and went to see the old woman who sat at her cabin door and watched the babies and children crawling about, under the trees, or making mud pies. Then we went back to the house, where, in grandma's big shady room my two sisters took lessons from her in fine needlework; for the knowledge of sewing in fine dainty stitches was a part of every Southern woman's education.

The rest of us went out under the trees to play. After dinner we all went out to play. What happy days we spent, and how the weeks flew by. Often a carriage would come down the avenue, and aunts and uncles and cousins would come; one set after another; and Mum Jinny would get up the most delicious dinners; and the old place was filled with laughing and happy voices. There was a great fig tree on whose low branches dozens of children, black and white, would ride to New Orleans, or to the moon, or to the North; or we would all run down the avenue to the very end and see the great prairie stretching to the other end of the world; with here and there groups of trees around a pond, with many cattle lying in the shade. We were not allowed to go out on the prairie because there were cattle who were wild; but at the end of the avenue the Road to Opelousas ran through a magnolia wood, with a small bayou, or creek, running through it; and here we went crayfishing or picked blackberries on its banks.

The magnolias had long banners of Spanish moss hanging from the bunches of green shiney leaves; and quantities of yellow jesamine ran up to the very top of the trees.

Sometimes we would see a snake, and one of the colored boys would get a big stick and kill it; often we gathered the magnolia cones on the ground, and took out the bright coral seeds to string as beads.

There was a large garden at one side of the yard which had a broad walk down the center, which reached the very end; where under a row of crepe myrtle trees was a long row of beehives; and then rows of orange-trees, figs and pomegranates; and roses of all colors on one side of the walk, with vegetable beds on the other; the beds all edged with sorrel to keep them from being washed away by the heavy rains.

Sometimes we went to the loom house and watched Mum Matty weaving the cotton cloth for the clothing for the hands on the place; or to the house where the women carded and spun the cotton. It was all so interesting to us. One day Aunt Anne came to spend the day, bringing our cousins, Kate, Aphra, Perry and William, and we had a great time. One of the negro boys had found a dead chicken and we arranged for a great funeral. The boys made a wagon of fig branches and four of them covered him with a white rag; and then marched in a procession singing one of the quaint negro hymns; all the white children next to the hearse marching two by two and the colored children following in the same order. I remember the words of the hymn:

We're a-marching to the grave,
We're a-marching to the grave, my Lord,
We're a-marching to the grave,
To lay this body down.

My sister says he's happy
By de grace of God we'll meet her,
In de last long solemn day
When we stand around de throne.

Then again, We're a marchin' to the grave, etc.

After marching all the way up the avenue, and down again, we stopped at the grave, under the big magnolia tree by the gate, and my sister, Maria, preached a sermon from the text "We must all die;" and the chicken was buried with great solemnity.

At last our happy summer was drawing to a close, and September came. We began to hear rumors of cholera in New Orleans, and then it was epidemic; then we heard of a case in Opelousas, and one day a man brought the news that one of our aunts had the disease, and our grandmother went to her at once.

The next day a messenger came for our grandfather saying that grandma had been taken ill, and he left immediately; but found her in a state of collapse, and she died in less than an hour. There was weeping and great dread and confusion. The weather was hot and she was to be brought that night to be buried in the family grave-yard at the back of the plantation. As soon as it was dark all the negroes, great and small were lined up on each side of the avenue, many holding torches.

Women and children were never allowed to go to a funeral in Louisiana, and we were kept shut up in the house, but we heard the loud weeping of the negro women as the hearse came in sight carrying their beloved mistress; and as it passed they fell into line and followed the carriage in which our grandfather and his sons were riding. From the windows we saw the procession as it came through the great gate and passed on to the grave-yard. I can see it all plainly as I saw it then, and poor grandpa, too, as he came in and passed on to his own room, none of us daring to intrude except sister Maria and sister Fanny, who opened the door softly, and came out after a while, with red swollen eyes. It was sad for all of us, and dreadfully sad for the travelers when they could get back to us. Aunt Clara, who was to have had a gay wedding, was quietly married to Dr. Jewell, and took charge of the house.

We all missed our dear lovely grandmother, and often went to her grave and covered it with flowers.

Our mother told us that they had chosen Cincinnati for our home, because it was so much easier to get to New Orleans from there than from New York, which my father would have preferred. The stage journey over the Alleghenys was a tedious one, and from Cincinnati one could take a steamboat and go direct.

In December our little sister Nannie was born and early in the spring we went to New Orleans to take a boat for Cincinnati, where we arrived after a long trip, on account of low

water in the Ohio River; but we never tired looking at the lovely hills on the banks, which were the first we had ever seen. We stayed at the Broadway Hotel until our father found a house to suit him, which he finally did, and he bought a large handsome house in a row of four on Third Street and Lawrence. We were the fourth from the corner, and opposite this row was the fine old Lytle place, which had a whole city square filled with beautiful old trees, with lovely old Colonial house in the center.

When General Jackson, at the expiration of his second term as President, on his way back to Tennessee, stopped in Cincinnati, General and Mrs. Lytle gave him a reception, the invitation to which my mother declined on account of the recent death of my father; but when Mrs. Lytle heard that my grandfather and General Jackson were old friends, she insisted on the three oldest of the children being allowed to go to the reception, and General Lytle himself took us up to the guest of honor and said, "General, allow me to present to you three of the grandchildren of your friend, Judge Seth Lewis of Louisiana." General Jackson with a start of surprise said, "You don't tell me so, God bless me, Seth Lewis's grandchildren," and he gave each of us a kiss and was genuinely glad to see us.

QUERIES

Anyone possessing pre-1803 manuscripts pertaining to Daniel Clark, an American agent in Spanish New Orleans, is asked to contact Glenn R. Conrad at Box 4-0831, U.S.L., Lafayette, Louisiana 70504.

Charles D. Arceneaux is looking for information concerning the lineage of Charles Richard (born ca. 1840) and Irma Darby (born ca. 1845). Charles and Irma were married sometime prior to 1861 and had seven children: Mary, born 1861; Charles, born 1868; Irma, born 1865; Louise, born 1868; Azama, born 1871; George, born 1873; and Conrad, born 1878. Sometime before 1865, the family established a farm near Grand Coteau. He is willing to exchange information. Please direct all correspondence to Charles D. Arceneaux, Rt. 1, Box 251A, Medical Lake, Washington 99022.

ELECTION OF A SINDIC IN THE ATTAKAPAS, 1773

Translated by Carl A. Brasseaux

May 16, 1773. At three p.m., the *habitans* of Attakapas assembled to elect a second *sindic* to assist *Sieur Bérard* in the assessment of wood for the church and all related operations, as well as the collection of funds due to the contractor for labor on the church. The votes of the *habitans* present having been tabulated, all with one accord have appointed *Sieur Louis Armand Ducrest* to assist *Sieur Bérard*, previously elected *sindic* and reinstated by all of the *habitans* named in this *proces-verbal*, who have [either] signed or had someone sign for them, as well as ourselves, the commandants in the Attakapas district on said day, month, and year.

L'abbé Soïrez Collete
for Claude Martin

Olivier Thibodeaux
Amant Thibodeaux
Paul Thibodeaux
François Guillebeau
Michel Bernard
Simon LeBlanc
Charles Guillebeau
Charles Babino
Philippe Wilz [Wiltz]
Joseph Wilz
Joseph Hébert
Pierre Broussard
Silvain Broussard
Jean-Baptiste Broussard
Simon Broussard
Jean Trahan
Pierre Naiza [Nezat]

François Décuir

Fusilier de la Claire
for Firmin Landry

Jean Labbé, fils
Vincent Barras
Martin Soudric
Michel Trahan
Joseph Broussard
Jean-Baptiste Segure
Jean-Baptiste Hébert
François Broussard
Jean Dugas
Charles Dugas
Baptiste la Baue
Pierre Dugas
Armand Broussard
Anselme Thibodeau
Claude Broussard
René Trahan
Michel Trahan
Antoine Bonin
Jean-Louis Bonin
Paul Trahan
Jean-Charles Trahan
Pierre Porche

François Décuir

Sieurs Bordat and *Boutté* have named *Sieur Louis Grevemberg*, signed *Boutté*, *Borda[t]*

Messrs. de la Houssaye and *de Vaugine* have nominated, through *Sieur Bessière*, *Sieur Jean-Baptiste Grevemberg* as *sindic*.

For de la Houssaye and *de Vaugine*, *Bessière*

Sieur Louis Grevemberg nominated *Sieur Boutté, fils*, as *sindic*.

[signed] *Louis Grevemberg*

Having seen the above signatures and after having counted the votes and having found that a plurality of forty-seven votes were cast in favor of *Sieur Armand Ducrest*, we have determined that he should hold the office of *sindic* and assist *Sieur Bérard*.

At Attakapas, May 16, 1773.

[signed] *Fusilier de la Claire*

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Laplen, B.	40		Barkeeper	France	France	France
Elen N.	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Baltimore	La.
Naomi	4	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Mary	3	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Pascotine	1	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Laraudie? H.	63		Gunsmith	France	France	France
Provost	35		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Provost, Albert	13	Nephew		La.	La.	La.
Lemaire, Leon	28		Gen. Mer.	La.	France	France
Mary	23		Housekpr.	La.	Germany	La.
Beatrice	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Leona	4	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Leon, Jr.	2	Son		La.	La.	La.
Albert J.	3m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Albert A.	3m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Gray, Stephen	15	Orphan	Clerk	La.	?	?
Pharr, Elias A.	40		Steamboat Capt.	N.C.	?	?
Amelia	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Ireland	La.
Alberta	10	Daughter	At School	La.	N.C.	La.
Eunice	8	Daughter	At School	La.	N.C.	La.
Gall	6	Son		La.	N.C.	La.
Call, Jasper	65		Sawmill Prop.	Germany	?	?
Frances	55		Housekpr.	La.	Va.	Ky.
Harris, William	69	Wife	Lbr. Clerk	Scotland	Scotland	Scotland
George	43		Hotel Clerk	Indiana	Ill.	Indiana
Harriet	41	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Charles	21	Son		La.	Ind.	La.
Lelah	17	Daughter	Picture Agent	La.	Ind.	La.
Lavenia	14	Daughter	At School	La.	Ind.	La.
Clayton	12	Son	At School	La.	Ind.	La.
Hattie	8	Daughter	At School	La.	Ind.	La.
Lottie	5	Daughter		La.	Ind.	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Eula	3	Daughter		La.	Ind.	La.
Clifton	2m	Son		La.	Ind.	La.
Moore, Nancy	79	Mother		Tenn.	?	?
Phillips, Ephriam	29	Son-in-law	Carpenter	Ky.	Va.	Pa.
Lucy	29	Wife		La.	Ind.	La.
Bourne, E.	63	Boarder	Dentist	N.Y.	Conn.	Conn.
Roberts, Robert	47	Boarder	Sewing Machinery	N.Y.	N.Y.	N.Y.
Neagebauer, Sarah	20	Boarder		Miss.	Germany	Tenn.
Fignio?, Louis	27	Boarder	Hostler	La.	?	La.
Heirs, W. H.	38		Surveyor	Ill.	Ireland	Va.
M. F.	33	Wife	Housekpr.	Ala.	N.H.	S.C.
Fannie	13	Daughter	At School	Ill.	Ill.	Ala.
Alice M.	9	Daughter	At School	La.	Ill.	Ala.
Patric	7	Son	At School	La.	Ill.	Ala.
Julie	5	Daughter		La.	Ill.	Ala.
Mickey	3	Son		La.	Ill.	Ala.
Guth, Jacob	41		Grocer	Germany	Germany	Germany
Caroline	37	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Germany	La.
Henry	13	Son	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Ella	4	Daughter		La.	Germany	La.
Mary	2	Daughter		La.	Germany	La.
Kramer, William	42		Grocer	Germany	Germany	Germany
Caroline	34	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Germany	Germany
Theophilas	13	Son	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Edmund	12	Son	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Mary	10	Daughter	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Will B.	8	Son	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Fred C.	5	Son		La.	Germany	La.
Joseph F.	3	Son		La.	Germany	La.
George V.	1	Son		La.	Germany	La.
Sabatier, Joseph	50		Carriage Repairs	France	France	France

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Lucy	32	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Marial, August	26	Boarder	Works in Foundry	France	France	France
Fuller, Jerry C.	49		Engineer	Mich.	Penn.	Penn.
Ellen	49	Wife	Housekpr.	Ohio	Ohio	At Sea
Jasper	19	Son	Engineer	La.	Mich.	Ohio
Mattes, Max	26		Baker	Germany	Germany	Germany
Mary	20	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Germany	Germany
Naughtbauer, Will	69	Boarder	Clerk	Germany	Germany	Germany
Doerle, George D.	23		Baker	La.	Europe	Europe
Dorothea	45	Mother	Housekpr.	Europe	Europe	Europe
Camille, John	30		Grocer	France	France	France
Marie	28	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Louise	6	Daughter		La.	France	France
Emma	3	Daughter		La.	France	France
Fisher, John	43		Swamper	Miss.	Europe	Europe
Martha	39	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	S. C.	La.
Louella	14	Daughter	At School	La.	Miss.	La.
Hardy	9	Son		La.	La.	La.
Melvin	7	Son		La.	Miss.	La.
Jacob	5	Son		La.	Miss.	La.
Eddie	3	Son		La.	Miss.	La.
Freddie	5m	Son		La.	Miss.	La.
Louis, Frances	25		Washing	La.	?	?
Noel	25	Husband	Engineer	La.	?	?
Beckman, Henry	26		Grocer	Germany	Germany	Germany
Emma	26	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Germany	Germany
Bauman, Fred	20	Boarder	Grocer	Miss.	Germany	Germany
Morris, M.	49		Dry Goods Merchant	Germany	Germany	Germany
Ernestine	45	Wife	Housekpr.	Germany	Germany	Germany
Fannie	16	Daughter	Seamstress	Mich.	Germany	Germany
Isidor	12	Son	At School	Mich.	Germany	Germany
Anna	8	Daughter		Mich.	Germany	Germany

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Emmer, John	36		Gen. Mer.	La.	Germany	Germany
Adele	32	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Spain	Spain
Mary D.	13	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Willie	10	Son	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Josephine	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Albert	7	Son		La.	La.	La.
Mayer, Mary	17	Niece		La.	Germany	Germany
Philips, Elizabeth	25		Housekpr.	La.	?	?
Elie G.	25	Husband	Jobbing	Residence not known		
Artigue, Pierre	54		Grocer	France	France	France
Mary	46	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Henry, Susan	45		Huckster	Ca.	N.C.	N.C.
Spears, A. J.	65		None	Miss.	?	Miss.
Ann	60	Wife	Housekpr.	Miss.	Ky.	Ill.
Erath, Victor	29		Brewer	Switz.	Switz.	Switz.
Baban	25	Wife	Housekpr.	Germany	Germany	Germany
Anne	6m	Daughter		La.	Switz.	Switz.
Scheicher, Martin	37	Boarder	Asst. Brewer	Germany	Germany	Germany
Chambord, Joseph	45		Huckster	France	France	France
Charlotte	42	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	England	Va.
Paul C.	10	Son		La.	France	La.
Mary	17	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Michel, Heymann	43		Dry Goods Merchant	France	France	France
Valentine	40	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	France
Eugenie	11	Daughter		La.	France	France
Leon	10	Son		La.	France	France
Outif, Charles	28		Dry Goods Merchant	La.	Germany	France
Levy, M.	22		Dry Goods Merchant	La.	Germany	Germany
Wise, Joseph H.	50		Dry Goods Merchant	Russia	Poland	Poland
Caroline	57	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Castille, P. F.	24	Boarder	Clerk	La.	La.	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Henry, Eugene	53		Jeweler	France	France	France
Matilda	19	Adopted Daughter		Texas	France	France
Peter F.	50			France	France	France
Matilda	30	Wife	Housekpr.	Va.	Va.	Va.
August	19	Son	Carpenter	Texas	France	France
Willie	17	Son	Farmer	Texas	France	France
Jonas	10	Son	At School	Texas	France	Va.
Marie	8	Daughter		La.	France	Va.
E. Leo	6	Son		La.	France	Va.
Lyllie Mary	5	Daughter		La.	France	Va.
Elva	1	Daughter		La.	France	Va.
Eisenman, E.	33		Dry Goods Merchant	France	France	Germany
Hadele	32	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Nathan	4	Son		La.	France	France
Gustave	3	Son		La.	France	France
Butcher, Isaac	38		Constable	La.	?	?
Huth, Jacob	34		Seltzer Mfg. Housekpr.	La.	Europe	Europe
Rose	26	Wife		La.	France	La.
Harry H.	7	Son		La.	La.	La.
Burke, W. R.	41		Collector of Corp.	La.	Ireland	Ireland
Eliza	38	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
McDonald, J. E.	32		Hostler	Ala.	Europe	Europe
Emma	26	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Ella	7	Daughter		La.	Ala.	La.
Albert B.	4	Son		La.	Ala.	La.
Rose L.	2	Daughter		La.	Ala.	La.
Ehrlich, Sam	48		Dry Goods Merchant	La.	Ala.	La.
Mary	35	Wife	Housekpr.	Europe	Europe	Europe
Sarah E.	16	Daughter	Assistant	Europe	Europe	Europe
Belle	11	Daughter	At School	La.	Europe	Europe
Simon	8	Son		La.	Europe	Europe
Rachel	6	Daughter		La.	Europe	Europe

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THE FIRST COCKFIGHT IN ST. LANDRY PARISH^{*}

Our town was enlivened on the day of our last issue, by an event somewhat unique in its character, and as we believe, it is the first time any thing of the kind has happened hereabouts, we give it the benefit of publicity. Early in the afternoon groups of excited individuals might have been seen, clustered on the corners, evidently engaged in anxious debate, and being of an inquiring turn of mind, we joined the throng and learned that a Cock Fight, between Grey Eagle pitted by our correspondent O.K. and Give-Em-Fits, backed by the owner of "the one eyed rooster" was to come off immediately. The chickens were pronounced in good order, and it was avered that they only wanted proper "heeling" to go prime. We should state to the uninitiated, that heeling a cock, means placing two small sharp pieces of steel wire about two inches in length on either leg in place of the natural spurs, when this is accomplished and all the neck feathers are shaved off, the fowl is considered in fighting trim. The combatants were tossed into a ring, some twelve feet in diameter, and both being of hostile dispositions, they pitched into each other forthwith.

The first round was fought with about equal success until Give-Em-Fits making a feint with his bill, gave his opponent a back cut and "rattled" him in the neck.

Second round--Both come to taw in fine order, and after some sharp dodging Grey Eagle "hangs" his opponent.

Third roun--Give-Em-Fits goes in with his bill, but gets a dig in the bread-basket.

Fourth round--Excitement intense, betting two to one on the Eagle: both cocks start for the center but Give-Em-Fits considering himself well "heeled" changes his mind, makes a counter rush and illustrates the wise, saw that discretion is the better part of valor, Grey Eagle crows and O.K. pockets an X.

Some other fights came off in the afternoon, which we did not witness and cannot chronicle, but in this connection, we hope our readers will pardon us a serious word. We know our town is dull, so dull indeed that it makes almost any amusement excusable; but we ask candidly, is there any real pleasure to and enlightened mind in seeing two poor unoffending birds murder each other by inches. Cannot our appetite for blood, for such it surely is, be appeased by some mode less cruel? If it can, in Heaven's name, let us replace such miscalled sport by something less barbarous and more in accordance with the customs and tastes of an enlightened christian community.

^{*}From The Opelousas Courier, February 26, 1853

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

DEATH OF AN OLD CITIZEN. Last Sunday morning at 4 o'clock, Mr. John B. Reynolds died, aged 73 years and three months. The deceased, who was a native of Lafayette Parish, where he was born June 21st, 1803, has led a most eventful life.

When but a child, his parents moved to Petite Anse Island; from there they came to New Iberia to live, when the place contained but a few houses. In 1820, young Reynolds went to New Orleans to live. In 1821, he moved to St. Augustine, Florida, the oldest city in America, where he resided for thirteen years. Returning to New Iberia for the purpose, he was married June 9th, 1829, when he took his bride back with him to Florida. The same year, he attended a camp meeting near Tallahassee, Florida, where he embraced religion and joined the Methodist church of which he was a consistent member up to the time of his death. In 1835, he enlisted as a soldier in the Florida Indian war, and aided his adopted State in the time of her trial. Returning to New Iberia in 1836, he has resided in this section ever since.

The remains of the old veteran were borne to their last resting place on Sunday afternoon, followed by a large number of citizens. The services which preceded, at the Methodist church, were quite affecting. Mr. Reynolds was father of Mr. John Reynolds and uncle of Messrs. Riggs.

From the Louisiana Sugar Bowl, September 14, 1876.

Henry Train (remember the name) has been sent to the parish of Terrebonne in the last month, by the Warmoth Party, to run against Judge Gates. We learn that, like most all of the carpet baggers, he is a man of desperate political fortunes and must have an office of some kind. Do the freedmen of this district want such a judge? Do they want to exchange a good judge for a bad one? We trust they have better sense and better principles than to support this stranger whom they know nothing about.

From the Franklin Planter's Banner, April 11, 1868, p. 2

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Official Organ of the
Attakapas Historical Association
published in cooperation with the
Center for Louisiana Studies
University of Southwestern Louisiana

Managing Editor: Carl A. Brasseaux
Associate Editors: Jacqueline Voorhies, Timothy Reilly
Consulting Editors: Glenn R. Conrad, Mathe Allain
Circulation Manager: Anna Jane Marks

Dues Schedule:

Life membership for individuals: \$100.00

Annual dues for individuals:

- a. Active or Associate (out-of-state) membership: \$5.00
- b. Contributing membership: \$15.00
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Annual Institutional Dues:

- a. Regular: \$5.00
- b. Sustaining: \$10.00

Canadian dues: Same as American dues, payable in U. S. dollars.

Foreign dues: \$5.00 plus postage.

The Attakapas Historical Association and the Center for Louisiana Studies assume no responsibility for statements of fact or opinion made by contributing authors. In addition, the publishers disclaim all responsibility for loss of any materials submitted for publication. Authors should retain a copy of their work. Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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P. O. Box 4-3010
University of Southwestern Louisiana
Lafayette, Louisiana 70504

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CHRETIEN POINT

By Carl A. Brusseaux

Sitting at the head of an impressive oak alley along Bayou Bourbeux in southern St. Landry Parish, Chretien Point possesses a sense of timeless beauty. This stately, antebellum plantation home is perhaps Louisiana's best extant example of the blend of French-colonial and Greek Revival architecture which was popular in South Louisiana during the 1830s. In a word, the structure contains the traditional French, two-story room configuration—three rooms wide by one and one-half rooms deep—as well as French doors and ornamentation, while the exterior features a prominent Greek Revival portico.

In addition to its architectural value, Chretien Point is a significant historical landmark. Built between 1831 and 1835 for Hypolite Chretien II by Samuel Young and Jonathan Harris at a cost of \$7,000, this antebellum home served as the focal point of a 1,200-acre sugar plantation. In 1863, the plantation was the scene of a skirmish between Thomas Greene's Confederate calvarymen and Union troops



commanded by Godfrey Weitzel. Following the battle, Chretien Point was allegedly spared destruction when Weitzel acknowledged Hypolite Chretien III's Masonic distress signal. Nevertheless, Weitzels' troops confiscated produce, livestock and implements valued in excess of \$60,000.

The plantation never recovered from the financial reverses of the Civil War years, and Chretien Point fell into a chronic state of disrepair in the late 19th and 20th centuries while under the ownership of Celeste Gardiner Chretien and Judge G. A. Gardiner. In 1975, however, Mr. and Mrs. Louis J. Cornay of Lafayette purchased the antebellum home. During the months following the sale, the Cornays devoted considerable time, effort and expense to restore the home. Through their efforts, the deterioration of Chretien Point has been arrested; indeed, this beautiful antebellum home has been preserved for many future generations.



CROWLEY AND THE 1940 FLOOD

By Mary Alice Fontenot

All was well in Crowley during the first week of August 1940. The "Rice Capital" was gripped by the mid-summer doldrums. The serenity of this Acadia Parish town, however, would soon be shattered by an unprecedented rain storm which blanketed Crowley with as much as eight feet of water and thus disrupted communications and threatened lives.

On August 5, 1940, the national wire services carried a United States Weather Service bulletin reporting a tropical storm in the Gulf of Mexico, 250 miles south of Mobile. (1) A small-craft warning was issued, and, on the following day, serious flooding was reported in New Orleans and Plaquemines Parish. (2)

After skirting the Southeast Louisiana coast, the unnamed storm embarked on a meandering course through the western Gulf of Mexico, finally striking the Texas coastline near Port Arthur, Texas. As it moved inland, the hurricane lost intensity and storm warnings were lowered. (3)

As the storm weakened and died, Southwest Louisiana was covered by torrential rains. According to the New Orleans weather bureau, the unusually heavy rainfall was due to the storm's erratic movements as it crossed the Gulf. (4)

An unprecedented 20 inches of rain fell over Southwest Louisiana in a 24-hour period. In Lafayette, weather watchers recorded 19.93 inches of rain during the 24-hour period and a total of 27.25 inches for the 4-day period ending at 7 p.m., August 10. (5) Although such figures were consistent throughout the rice belt, flooding was most severe in Crowley.

Crowley, the seat of justice in Acadia Parish, is situated in a cove, or low-lying plain, bordered on the south by Bayou Blanc, on the north by Bayou Wikoff and a large irrigation canal, and on the west by Bayou Plaquemine Brule. With drainage impeded by storm debris and high tides, these waterways, swollen with rainfall, overflowed their banks, and, by the morning of August 8, the low-lying areas of the town were inundated by five-to-six feet of water. Highway traffic was blocked; Crowley was marooned. (6)



Residents whose homes were not under water went to the aid of those threatened by rising floodwaters. Volunteers manned all available boats—motorboats, paddle boats and pirogues—and went to the rescue of flood victims in south and west Crowley. An estimated 500 refugees were brought to public buildings for housing. In addition, plans were made for emergency inoculations against typhoid, as well as the distribution of food, dry clothing and

1. The New Orleans Times-Picayune, August 5, 1940.

2. *Ibid.*, August 6, 1940.

3. *Ibid.*, August 8, 1940.

4. *Ibid.*, August 9, 1940.

5. *Ibid.*, August 15, 1940.

6. *Ibid.*, August 9, 1940.

bedding among the flood victims. (7)

The *Crowley Signal* of August 8 carried the following alarming headlines: "Flood Conditions Menace City." The weather bureau predicted an additional eight-to-ten inches of rainfall, and homeowners with shallow wells were warned to boil water for home consumption. In addition, the floodwaters made travel by car virtually impossible, even in Crowley's main business district. As a consequence, many businesses failed to open that morning.

In reporting the disruption of intracity transportation, the *Crowley Signal* notified its subscribers that its issues would be henceforth delivered only to businesses and residential areas not under water. According to the paper, delivery to such areas was too dangerous to young carriers. Thus, because the city lacked a radio station and because many telephones were out of order, communications within the Rice Capital were effectively disrupted.

On the morning of August 9, the heroic rescue workers of the preceding day became victims of the rising floodwaters. The water level had risen at an incredible rate during the night, and still the rains came. Residents of the higher areas within the city who had felt safe upon going to bed awoke to find the floodwaters lapping at their doorsteps or swirling through their homes. The entire city was inundated to depths of from three to eight feet.

As the floodwaters crested, electrical power failed; the city was enshrouded in darkness. Telephones with fuse boxes below the water level went out and thousands of residents lost contact with one another and the outside world. The newspaper was forced to suspend publication, and sewerage facilities became clogged and useless. (8)

It was indeed fortunate that many Crowley residences were two-story

structures. These homes provided refuge for hundreds of persons forced to flee their one-story homes. However, Crowley residents with no place to go were taken to refugee camps in Lafayette, Jennings and other area towns in special boxcar trains; an estimated 6,000 persons were thus transported during the course of the flood. (9)

For those who remained in Crowley, health conditions were termed "desperate." A dozen doctors, fifteen health inspectors and a crew of nurses were brought into the town to aid the local medical force in inoculating the population against typhoid and diphtheria. (10)

In addition to disease, Crowley residents who refused to flee their homes faced problems in obtaining food. Foodstuffs were plentiful in Crowley at the outset of the flood, and many residents started a "run" on local stores to lay in supplies. Store owners and wholesale suppliers kept their businesses open as long as possible, dispensing staples and canned food from shelves above the water level. Moreover, foodstuffs were brought in by the Red Cross. (11) Individuals not domiciled in public refugee centers, however, encountered great difficulty in replenishing their dwindling food supplies. For example, most Crowley residents had to wade or swim through water from four to eight feet in depth, pack foodstuffs in burlap sacks, and somehow transport these precious commodities home. One enterprising teenager, however, solved the problem by developing a novel and practical delivery system which was soon imitated by others—he floated his rations home in a metal washtub.

Despite the high water, Southern Pacific passenger trains continued to run on schedule until August 10, when a washout west of Crowley forced curtailment of train

7. The *Crowley Signal*, August 8, 1940.

8. *Times-Picayune*, August 10, 1940.

9. *Ibid.*, August 10, 11, 12, 1940.

10. *Ibid.*, August 10, 1940.

11. *Ibid.*

service. (12) Happily, rail communication between Crowley and Lafayette was maintained, removing refugees and taking in food and medical supplies. (13)

The rain stopped on August 10 and skies cleared, but floodwaters continued to rise until the following day. (14) Additional Crowley residents were forced from their homes, and many sought refuge on the Southern Pacific Railroad bed. (15) The Rice Capital still lacked electricity, and

when power lines to Eunice were repaired and the Crowley power plant was revitalized. (16) The one city service which remained in operation throughout the flood was the natural gas system; therefore, stoves could be used for cooking purposes as long as the burners were above water level. (17) In addition, although crippled, telephone communication with surrounding communities was maintained. (18)



Parkerson Avenue, Crowley

candles, kerosene lamps and flashlights were in short supply. The sewerage system was inoperative. The water system was also out of order until the evening of August 10,

On August 11, levees bordering the irrigation canal north of Crowley were dynamited to afford relief from the rising floodwaters; the water level in the Rice

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*

15. Ena B. Meaux, interviewed by the author on March 2, 1977.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. M. M. Buchanan, interviewed by the author on March 10, 1977.

Capital subsequently fell four and one-half inches. Nevertheless, boats continued to ply the flooded streets between schools, churches, hospitals, rice mills and other buildings. (19) As a result of deteriorating conditions in these intracity refugee camps Crowley Mayor Matt Buatt stated that it was imperative that hundreds of people, crowded in public buildings for two days, be evacuated. (20) Lafayette then dispatched two additional boxcar trains to Crowley. (21)

As the conditions worsened, the state police established disaster headquarters in Crowley, and the city was virtually placed under martial law. Troopers patrolled the darkened streets in motorboats, assisted in the rescue work, halted joy riders in boats, and prevented looting. (No looting was reported; however, it would have taken a brave or desperate thief to wade through chest-deep water to carry off loot; besides, there was no place to take it.) (22)

Governor Sam Jones toured the flooded area by air, then went to Crowley by car and boat from Lafayette. (23) A twenty-nine-car refugee train subsequently brought an additional 3,000 refugees to Lafayette. Still later, electricity was restored to the Acadia Parish Courthouse and Crowley railroad station, but the remainder of the city was enshrouded in darkness. (24)

By August 12, the floodwaters had fallen nearly two feet; nevertheless, the city streets remained under two to seven feet of water. (25) Volunteers from Lafayette, Rayne, Jennings, Eunice and Church Point who had operated the fleet of rescue of boats were exhausted; some had worked

twenty-four to twenty-six hours without rest. (26) A fresh crew of state troopers was sent to relieve the patrolmen who had been on duty without relief since the floodwaters crested. (27)

Receding slowly, the floodwaters had fallen by August 13 to depths ranging from fifteen inches to four feet. The shallowness of the water made it impossible to use large motorboats, but flat-bottoms were still in use and wading was much facilitated. (Wading in waist-deep water had been a slow, fatiguing process.) Electrical power was restored, but the sanitation problem increased with the lowering of the water. (28)

It took days for Crowley to work its way out of the slime—a massive task of rehabilitation. Residents launched a "mopping-up" operation as the water fell, using hundreds of gallons of disinfectant to swab mud-coated buildings, and collecting garbage and debris in sugar carts pulled by high-wheeled tractors. The water system was chlorinated, and W. P. A. workers disposed of drowned animals and provided labor for spreading lime, chlorine and other disinfectants to remove spoiled vegetables, fruit and meat from Crowley stores. Truckloads of donated oil were used to burn the carcasses of drowned or starved animals, an estimated 50,000 of which perished throughout the area. (29) An awful stench, which no amount of disinfectant could dissipate, pervaded the city for days afterwards. (30)

The cost of repairing the damage to homes and businesses, not to mention the losses in crops and livestock, was

19. *Times-Picayune*, August 12, 1940.

20. *Ibid.*, August 11, 1940.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, August 12, 1940.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*, August 11, 1940.

27. *Ibid.*, August 12, 1940.

28. *Ibid.*, August 13, 1940.

29. *Ibid.*, August 13, 14, 1940.

30. Oral tradition.



*View of Parkerson Avenue from the
Acadia Parish Courthouse, 1940*

astronomical. Warped flooring buckled as it dried; carpeting was a total loss; furniture fell apart. Yet no one could collect insurance on damage resulting from rising water.

Nevertheless, Crowley emerged from the disastrous flood with some plusses. Automobiles, even those which had been entirely covered by water, could be dried out and made to run again. There were no deaths from the flood and no epidemic diseases. Seven babies were born, one in a Coast Guard boat.

Moreover, the flood had proved to be a great leveler—figuratively and, in some cases, literally—everyone was in the same boat. A new camaraderie was evident on the streets; the colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady had learned that they were really "sisters under the skin."

Today more than three-and-a-half decades later, Crowley residents most frequently remember the good things born

of the disaster—the concern shown by people of neighboring communities and the things that made them laugh. The following are samples of the thousands of stories (everyone who lived in Crowley in 1940 had a flood story) which form the oral tradition pertaining to the "high waters" of 1940.

Mrs. Bob Broadhurst, wife of a Crowley CPA, recalled the disaster by stating:

We didn't leave until the water covered the kitchen range downstairs, and I could no longer sterilize Bill's bottles. He was eight months old. I had no diapers, but Bill wore some napkins from Derousselle's restaurant. When the boat came we were upstairs; we came halfway down the stairs to get in the boat, which took us to the railroad station where we boarded a train for Lafayette. Bob was barefoot; I had

put all his shoes on top of an empty clothes hamper downstairs, and when the water came in the basket tipped and all the shoes scattered in the water. We rode in the baggage car of the train, seated on the floor.

I remember we gave Nancy Lyons the only seat in the car—the toilet—because she had the youngest baby. Some Lafayette friends, the Cecil Hawkins and Dr. "Happy" Davis, took us in until the water went down.

Mrs. George Rolloson, wife of a Crowley businessman, remembered:

We didn't leave Crowley because of our business, but we had to leave our home. We stayed with Bud and Elsie Core in their two-story home. Justin Wilson's wife and young baby were with us; Justin had gone to New Orleans. George and I and Lillian Wilson slept crossways on one of the upstairs beds. Justin came back by train in the middle of the night. I went down to open the door for him; I'll never forget; he came in with a huge bunch of

bananas and ten loaves of bread! He said, 'Where's my wife? Where's my wife?' and I sleepily answered, 'Upstairs in bed with George!'

M. M. "Buck" Buchanan, a telephone company manager, reminisced:

I was on my way back from vacationing at Carlsbad. I left my car in Jennings, got a ride as far as Midland, then walked the remaining nine miles to Crowley. I walked along the railroad bed, which was partially inundated, but there were some dry spots. Hundreds of snakes were piled one-on-top-of-the-other in dry spots. When I reached Bayou Blanc, west of Crowley, the current was very strong; three other men and I tied ourselves together with a rope to get across. I was at the office most of the time, so I gave permission for the tired rescuers to use my room at the Egan Hotel when I wasn't in it. One night I came back to find five nurses in my room—three in the bed and two on the floor!

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN WAR VETERANS
BURIED IN ST. PETER'S CEMETERY
CARENCRO, LOUISIANA
1874-1976

By Ruth Arceneaux and Claude J. Arceneaux

The Carencro area was settled long before St. Peter's Church was established in 1874. In fact, Acadian farmers were attracted to this rich agricultural area before the American Revolution; however, because St. Peter's Cemetery was established in 1874, this survey does not include a complete listing of this region's deceased war veterans. The Revolutionary War and War of 1812 veterans as well as Civil War veterans who died prior to 1874 were buried in St. John's Cemetery in Lafayette or other area cemeteries.

It is a well known fact that the residents of the Carencro area have been very patriotic over the years. In fact, it has been stated that the number of casualties from this area during World War II greatly exceeded the national average.

The compilers would like to emphasize the fact that St. Peter's is a rural, church-parish cemetery, established in 1874. It has provided to date the final resting place for 210 American war veterans, ranging from the Civil War to the Viet Nam conflict.



St. Peter's Cemetery, All Saints Day, 1976

WAR VETERANS BURIED IN ST. PETER'S CEMETERY

- ABBADIE, Maxime (1887-1945)
 Louisiana, Pvt., 51 Inf., 6 Div., World War I
 ALLEMAN, Leonard J. (1920-1954)
 Louisiana, AS, U.S.N.R., World War II
 ANCELET, Alebe (1912-1954)
 Louisiana, S 1, U.S.N.R., World War II
 ARCENEUX, Antoine F. (1908-1973)
 Louisiana, PFC, U. S. Army, World War II
 ARCENEUX, Charles Donald (1923-1945)
 Louisiana, Ensign, U. S. Navy, World War II
 ARCENEUX, Hiram M. (1895-1936)
 Louisiana, Cook, OM Corps, World War I
 ARCENEUX, Hypolite (1835- ?)
 Co. K, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
 ARCENEUX, Lester H. (1924-1970)
 Louisiana, PFC, Co. B, 81 Tank Bn., World War II
 ARCENEUX, O. (1833- ?)
 Co. C, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
 ARCENEUX, Roland R. (1928-1956)
 Louisiana, PFC, Inf., World War II
 ARCENEUX, Ulric (1891-1965)
 Louisiana, Pvt., COB, 156 Inf., World War I
 BABINEUX, Belizaire (1826- ?)
 Co. C, 1 La. Arty., CSA, Civil War
 BABINEUX, Curley (1922-1943)
 Louisiana, PFC, Inf., World War II
 BABINEUX, Honore (1844- ?)
 Co. F, 10 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
 BABINEUX, Joseph (1920-1965)
 Louisiana, PFC, 47 Inf., World War II
 BABINEUX, Sevigne (1837- ?)
 Co. B, La. Cav., CSA, Civil War
 BAJAT, Charley (1893-1975)
 U. S. Army, World War I
 BEGNAUD, Alcee (1895-1947)
 Louisiana, Pvt., Inf., 89 Div., World War I
 BEGNAUD, Stanley J. (1926-1972)
 Louisiana, Cpl., Army Air Forces, World War II
 BENOIT, Andrew (1930-1953)
 Louisiana, Cpl., 187 AB, RCT, Korea
 BENOIT, Eddie B. (1921-1950)
 Louisiana, Pvt., MD, World War II
 BENOIT, George (1927-1971)
 Louisiana, Pvt., Co. A, 359 Engr., GS Regt., World War II
 BENOIT, Horace (1896-1973)
 Louisiana, PFC, U. S. Army, World War I

- BENOIT, Ovignac (1893-1973)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- BENOIT, Rosemond (1823- ?)
Co. H, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BENOIT, Stanley (? -1943)
Louisiana, Cpl., 381 Bn., Coast Arty., (A. A.), World War II
- BERNARD, Anteol (1836- ?)
Co. K, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BERNARD, George Ellis (1904-1964)
Louisiana, PTRI, U.S.N.R., World War II
- BERNARD, Hq (1845- ?)
Co. A, 5 La. Milt., CSA, Civil War
- BERNARD, Napoleon (1911-1968)
Louisiana, S 1, U. S. Navy, World War II
- BERNARD, Raoul (? -1942)
Louisiana, Cpl., U. S. Army, World War II
- BERNARD, Seymour (1890-1956)
Louisiana, Pvt., 304 Fld. Arty., World War I
- BOUDREAUX, Phillip J., Jr. (1917-1972)
Louisiana, PFC, U. S. Army, World War II
- BRASSEAU, Easton (1918-1971)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War II
- BRASSEAU, Hebert J. (1915-1972)
Louisiana, S 1, U.S.N.R., World War II
- BRASSEAU, Melvin J. (1917-1959)
Louisiana, PFC, C 3704 Base Unit, AAF BSM, World War II
- BRAQUET, Fernand (1921-1956)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, 36 Cav., World War II
- BREAUX, A. B. John (1908-1944)
Louisiana, CEM, U. S. Navy, World War II
- BREAUX, Alcee J. (1896-1926)
Louisiana, Sargt., 113 Field SIG BAT TN, 38 Div., World War I
- BREAUX, C. (1845- ?)
Co. E, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BREAUX, Charles (1917-1951)
Louisiana, Cpl., 248 Field Arty. Bn., World War II
- BREAUX, Chester P. (1926-1969)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, 14 HHDSP, TRP, S 2, U. S. Army, World War II
- BREAUX, Esteve (1836- ?)
Co. B, 10 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BREAUX, Fabien (1915-1970)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, 776 Engr. Pd. Co., World War II
- BREAUX, Ivy, Sr. (1896-1929)
Louisiana, Pvt., 156 Inf., 39 Div., World War I
- BREAUX, Joseph D. (1832- ?)
Co. A, 7 La. Cav., Civil War

- BREAUX, Lawrence Louis (1896-1947)
Louisiana, S 2C, U.S.N.R.F., World War I
- BREAUX, Lester H. (1922-1960)
Louisiana, Sgt., 812 Base Unit, A.A.F., World War II
- BREAUX, Numa (1838-1927)
Co. E, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BREAUX, O. P. (1840- ?)
Co. E, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BREAUX, Rene (1913-1945)
Louisiana, PFC, 16 Inf., 1 Inf. Div., World War II
- BROUSSARD, F. A. (1835-1904)
Lieut., Co. 1, 2 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BROUSSARD, Joseph (1838- ?)
Co. E, Crescent La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- BROUSSARD, Lessin (1840- ?)
Co. A, 7 La. Cav., CSA, Civil War
- BROUSSARD, O. (1840-1880)
Co. H, 2 La. Res. Corps, CSA, Civil War
- BROUSSARD, Raoul (1897-1968)
Louisiana, Sgt., Co. C, 23 Inf., World War I
- BROUSSARD, Rheul P. (1915-1944)
Louisiana, Pvt., 120 Engr. C. Bn., World War II
- BROUSSARD, Tilden J. (1894-1964)
Louisiana, Pvt., Btry., Co. 36, Arty., CAC, World War I
- CAZAUDEBAT, Pierre J. (1910-1959)
Louisiana, PFC, Btry. B, 752 Fld. Arty. Bn., World War II
- CHAISSON, George (1912-1959)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, H & S Co., 52 Engr. C. Bn., World War II
- COMEAX, Alfred C. (1933-1974)
1st Lt., U. S. A. F., Vietnam
- COMEAX, Athanas (1833- ?)
Co. H, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- COMEAX, Cleophas (1895-1961)
Louisiana, Co. E., 364 Inf., 91 Div., World War I
- COMEAX, Howard P. (1912-1974)
Louisiana, Cpl., U. S. Army, World War II
- COMEAX, Hypolite (1846- ?)
Co. H, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- COMEAX, U. C. (1843- ?)
Co. H, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- CONOLLY, Edward Michael (1902-1972)
Louisiana, MM1, U. S. Navy, World War II
- CORMIER, Alexander, (1908-1971)
Louisiana, Tec. 4, 242 Gen. Hosp., World War II

- CORMIER, Belizaire (1830- ?)
Co. D, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- CORMIER, Clemile (1832- ?)
Co. A, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- CORMIER, Joaquin (1832- ?)
Co. A, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- CORMIER, Louis E. (1915-1965)
Louisiana, Put. Inf. Repl. Tng. Gen., World War II
- COUVILLION, Felix J. (1904-1950)
Louisiana, Pvt., 145 Inf., World War II
- COUVILLION, P. E. (1841-1893)
U.S.W.V., Union Army, Civil War
- CREDEUR, Agricola J. (1894-1976)
Louisiana, U. S. Army, World War I
- DELHOMME, Numa (1837- ?)
Crow's Co., 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- DOMEC, Elie (1921-1970)
Louisiana, PFC, 125 Gen. Hosp., World War II
- DOMEC, Victor (1889-1949)
Louisiana, Pvt., 156 Inf., 39 Div., World War I
- DOMINGUE, Adonis, (? - ?)
Co. K, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- DOMINGUE, Dolor (1897-1927)
Louisiana, Pvt., 366 Inf., 89 Div., World War I
- DOMINGUE, John (1896-1962)
Louisiana, Engr., U. S. Navy, World War I
- DOMINGUE, Valerie (1897-1968)
Louisiana, Pvt., Stn. Army Tng. Corps, World War I
- DOUCET, Perez Jean (1897-1946)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- DUGAS, Alexandre (1889-1968)
Louisiana, Pvt., Quarter Master Corps, World War I
- DUGAS, Dudley (1899-1953)
Louisiana, Pvt., 3 Div., Train OMC, World War I
- DUGAS, J. Ulysse (1895-1973)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. L, 156 Inf. Ng., World War I
- DUGAS, Napoleon (1909-1963)
Louisiana, PFC, Co. D, 78 Tank Bn., World War II
- DUGAS, Valsin, Jr. (1921-1953)
Louisiana, S 1, U.S.N.R., World War II
- DUGAS, Weston (1920-1948)
Louisiana, AS, U. S. Navy, World War II
- DUPUIS, Freddy (1893-1950)
Louisiana, Pvt., 114 Ammo Tn., 39 Div., World War I
- DUPUIS, George (? -1921)
Louisiana, Pvt., 162 Depot Brig., World War I

- DUPUIS, Joseph (1831- ?)
Co. D, 10 La. Inf.. CSA, Civil War
- DUPUIS, Leonard (1840- ?)
Co. D, 8 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- DUPUIS, Regile (1907-1961)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. B, 333 Inf., World War II
- ERNEST, Edward F. (1901-1974)
Louisiana, Major, U.S. Army, World War II, Korea
- ESTILLETTE, Ernest L. (1842- ?)
Co. F, La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- PAUL, Honore (1916-1956)
Louisiana, PFC, HQ Co. 23, Inf. Regt. World War II
- FORESTIER, Clebert (1887-1955)
Louisiana- Pvt., Co. B, 166 Inf., World War I
- FORESTIER, Louis Walter (1893-1954)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. 1, 155 INF., World War I
- FORESTIER, Philomen (1840- ?)
Co. E, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- FORESTIER, Rosemond (1905-1975)
Louisiana, Pvt., World War II
- FORRESTIER, Lucien (1917-1959)
Louisiana, Cpl., Co. C, 531 Engr., World War II
- FRANCEZ, Lwellyn J. (1919-1974)
Louisiana, AAF, World War II
- GAUTHIER, Otto A. (? -1931)
Louisiana, Sgt., OM Corps Det., 87 Div., World War I
- GILBERT, J. J. (1838- ?)
Co. D, 9 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GLAUDE, Kennedy (1896-1975)
Louisiana, U. S. Army, World War I
- GLAUDE, Odiele (1894-1973)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- GOUAUX, Fernand H. (1893-1962)
Louisiana, Col., AR Com., World War II
- GUIDROZ, Evariste (1835- ?)
Co. G, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GUIDROZ, Theodore (1896-1969)
Louisiana, PFC, Btry. I, 141 Fld, Arty., World War I
- GUIDRY, Albert (1844-1908)
Bond's Co., La. Milt., CSA, Civil War
- GUIDRY, Alfred (1831- ?)
Co. D, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GUIDRY, Anche (1895-1960)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. D. DEV Bn., World War I
- GUIDRY, Andre (1893-1960)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. D, DEV Bn., World War I
- GUIDRY, Charles (1846- ?)
Co. E, 7 La. Cav., CSA, Civil War

- GUIDRY, Felix (1834- ?)
Co. I, 7 La. Cav., CSA, Civil War
- GUIDRY, Louis (? -1918)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- GUIDRY, Olin (1915-1955)
Louisiana, Staff Sgt., 88 Engr. Pon. Bn., World War II
- GUIDRY, Samuel D. (1896-1974)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- GUIDRY, William W. (1894-1947)
Louisiana, Pvt. CAC, World War I
- GUIDRY, Veazie L. (1907-1969)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, 5868 SVC Comd. Unit, World War II
- GUILBEAU, Adolph (1839- ?)
Sgt., Co. E, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GUILBEAU, Alfred G. (1831- ?)
Co. D, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GUILBEAU, Daniel (? -1941)
Louisiana, Pvt. 141 Fld. Arty., 39 Div., World War I
- GUILBEAU, Edgar J. (1921-1945)
Louisiana, Staff Sgt, 184 Inf., World War II
- GUILBEAU, Frank L. (1904-1976)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War II
- GUILBEAU, George (1908-1976)
Louisiana, Sgt., U. S. Army, World War II
- GUILBEAU, John (1835- ?)
Co. D, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GUILBEAU, Leonce J. (? -1931)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- GUILBEAU, Louis (1838- ?)
Co. K, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GUILBEAU, Lucien (1835- ?)
Co. D, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- GUILBEAU, Willie (1890-1949)
Louisiana, PFC, 7 Casual Co., World War I
- HAINS, Wilson A. (? -1942)
Louisiana, Pvt. O. T. Sch., World War I
- HEBERT, Desire (1837- ?)
Co. C, 2 La. Cav., CSA, Civil War
- HEBERT, Hypolite (1825- ?)
Co. A, 7 La. Cav., CSA, Civil War
- HEBERT, Raoul (1895-1972)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- HERNANDEZ, Auguste (1925-1959)
Louisiana, S 1, U.S.N.R., World War II
- HERNANDEZ, Howard (1928-1959)
Louisiana, S. N., U. S. Navy, World War II
- JOHNSON, LeRoy (1921-1972)
Louisiana, PFC, Co. D, 363 Inf., World War II

- KILCHRIST, Ambroise (1921-1943)
Louisiana, Sgt., 156 Inf., 31 Inf. Div., World War II
- KILCHRIST, Saint Claire (1831- ?)
Crow's Co., 20 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- KILCHRIST, Victor (1841- ?)
Co. D, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- LABBE, John L. (1947-1970)
Louisiana, PFC, Trp. 3, SO6, Cav. Regt., Vietnam
- LANDRY, Angelas (1893-1972)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- LANDRY, Cyril J. B. (1925-1945)
Louisiana, PFC, 306 Inf., 77 Div., World War II
- LAQUE, Kenneth G. (1933-1974)
Louisiana, AIC, U.S.A.F., Korea
- LATOUR, Fernand (1900-1972)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. F. 45 Inf., World War I
- LEBLANC, Eugene (1922-1971)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, 58 OM Sales Co., World War II
- LEBLANC, John (1920-1961)
Louisiana, PFC, 106 Inf. Regt., World War II
- LEGER, Noah L. (1895-1938)
Louisiana, Pvt., 39 Bn. S.S. Guards, World War I
- LEGERE, Constant (1837-1923)
Co. E, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- LIVINGS, Ludovic (? -1929)
Louisiana, Pvt., 161 Depot Brig., World War I
- MALAPART, Felix (1835- ?)
Sgt., Co. F, 18 La. Inf. CSA, Civil War
- MARTIN, A. E. (1841-1892)
Co. A, 22 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- MARTIN, Albert B. (1894-1969)
Louisiana, Sgt., U. S. Army, World War I
- MARTIN, Martial T. (1838- ?)
Co. F, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- MARTIN, Numa (1837- ?)
Co. F, 7 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- MARTIN, Numa E. (1920-1944)
Louisiana, PFC, 30 Inf., World War II
- MARTIN, Robert B. (? - ?)
Btry. C, La. Lt. Arty., Spanish American War
- MECHE, Eric (1928-1968)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, U. S. Army, World War II
- MENARD, Nelson John (1931-1950)
Louisiana, PFC, Co. EI Marines, I Marine Div., Korea
- MERRILL, John E. (1915-1970)
Louisiana, M. Sgt., 310 Bomb. Wing, A. F., World War II, Korea
- MILLER, Antoine (1920-1945)
Louisiana, PFC, Inf., U. S. Army, World War II

- MILLER, Henry (? -1921)
Louisiana, PFC, QM Corps, World War I
- MILLER, Louie Edward, Jr. (1907-1969)
Louisiana, Sgt., Army Air Forces, World War II
- MILLER, Ulger (1892-1951)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. D, 125 Inf., World War I
- MILLER, Zachary Louis (1906-1973)
Louisiana, MM 2, U. S. Navy, World War II
- MOUTON, Alcede (1847- ?)
Co. K, 2 La. Cav., CSA, Civil War
- MOUTON, Eddie J. (1898-1969)
Louisiana, PFC, Co. G., World War I
- MOUTON, Felix (1839- ?)
Co. F, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- MOUTON, Freddie John (1895-1970)
Louisiana, Pvt., Btry. C, 64 Fld. Arty., World War I
- MOUTON, Henry (1921-1970)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War II
- MOUTON, Jude (1824- ?)
Co. A, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- MOUTON, Livodais (1833- ?)
Co. C, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- MOUTON, Robert Bruce (1918-1976)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War II
- POCHE, Willie J. (1926-1950)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War II
- POTIER, Felix (? - ?)
Co. D, 5 Inf., Spanish-American War
- POTIER, Howard (1923-1952)
Louisiana, PFC, 308, MP Escort Gd. Co., World War II
- PREJEAN, Clence (1897-1967)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- PREJEAN, Dominique (1843- ?)
Co. D, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- PREJEAN, Francis (1892-1975)
Louisiana, U. S. Army, World War I
- PREJEAN, Henry E. (1908-1976)
Louisiana, Cpl., AAF, World War II
- PREJEAN, Joseph (1842- ?)
Co. H, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- PREJEAN, Merlin (1922-1949)
Louisiana, Sgt., 180 Inf., 45 Div., World War II
- PREJEAN, Paul (1833- ?)
Co. E, Miles La. Legion, CSA, Civil War
- PREJEAN, Sosthene (1837- ?)
Co. E, 26 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- PREJEAN, Ursin T. (1831- ?)
Bond's Co., La. Mtd. Partisan Rangers, CSA, Civil War
- PREJEAN, Valerian (1832- ?)
Co. D, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War

- RICHARD, Alfred (? -1936)
Louisiana, Inf. Am. Service Corps, World War I
- RICHARD, Edgar (1926-1969)
Louisiana, Sgt., Btry A, 743 AAA Gun Bn., World War II
- RICHARD, Saul (1897-1967)
Louisiana, Pvt., Provost Guard Co., World War I
- RICHARD, Toussaint L. J. (1920-1944)
Louisiana, PFC, Med. Dept., World War II
- ROGER, Alexander (1919-1956)
Louisiana, AS, U.S.N.R., World War II
- ROGER, Antoine (1924-1968)
Louisiana, Pvt., 56 AA tng. Bn., CAC, World War II
- ROGER, Arvillien (1925-1973)
Louisiana, PFC, U. S. Army, World War II
- ROGER, David (1918-1969)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. B, Per. Cen., World War II
- ROGER, Louis (1820- ?)
Corp., Co. A, 30 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- ROGER, Martil (1888-1958)
Louisiana, Pvt., Co. I, 155 Inf., World War I
- ROGER, Shirley (1923-1959)
Louisiana, S 1, U. S. Navy, World War II
- ROGER, Weston (1919-1944)
Louisiana, PFC, 335 Inf., U. S. Army, World War II
- ROY, Ashton (1916-1973)
Louisiana, Tec. 5, 671 Med. Post TC, World War II
- ROYER, Auguste (1837- ?)
Co. A, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- SIMONEAUX, Ervilien (1841-1943)
Co. E, 7 La. Cav., CSA, Civil War
- SIMONEAUX, Janeus (1895-1968)
Louisiana, Pvt., U. S. Army, World War I
- SMITH, Justin (1927-1963)
Louisiana, PFC, Air Depot, GF-AAF, World War II
- SONNIER, Antoine (1826- ?)
Co. G, 18 La. Inf., CSA, Civil War
- SONNIER, Basille (1831- ?)
Co. B, 1A Inf., CSA, Civil War
- SONNIER, Wesley (1899-1958)
Louisiana, PFC, HQ Co., 38 Inf., World War I
- STELLY, Francis (1910-1959)
Louisiana, PFC, Co. E, 33 Engr., GS Regt., World War II

THE NEW IBERIA LITTLE THEATRE, 1923-1973*

By Glenn R. Conrad

Among the many civic clubs and associations which have flourished in New Iberia throughout the town's long history, the Little Theatre movement has probably been outstanding in the ebb and flow of success. During a span of fifty years from 1923 to 1973, three Little Theatre organizations came into being, flourished and then faded. In every instance, however, the period of dormancy has grown shorter.

The American Little Theatre movement had its origins in Chicago just after the turn of the century, but in the twilight of the Edwardian era the movement seemed to languish. It was not until after World War I that small-town America began to turn its back on the old system of travelling companies and, in its stead, embrace the local theatre.

There were several reasons for this about-face: Broadway had entered into the depths of a creative slump; transportation costs had risen, together with the cost of maintaining a troupe on the road; the new modes of cheap amusement to be found in the nickelodeon, and the movies were becoming popular. As the professional theatre retreated to a few famous stages in the larger cities, many small-town Americans began to give the idea of Little Theatre a second thought.

The small-town theatre movement was never intended as a money-making scheme; it was always nothing more than an attempt by a small group of people to give expression to a latent talent and to make life a little more pleasant for everyone in the community.

Here, then, was an outlet, a hobby, for the local English teacher, seamstress, housepainter, doctor, lawyer, matron, anyone. Indeed, the overriding characteristic of the Little Theatre movement is that it has always cut at sharp right angles across the structured patterns of society. Another characteristic of the movement is the long hours of hard work, not only by the performers, but also by those who stand behind the performers, literally and figuratively, the backstage crew. Finally, the movement has always been characterized by the generosity of the many people who know and appreciate the value of the Little Theatre movement.

In the fifty years or so since Little Theatre got underway, it has been greeted with mixed emotions by the American public. There have been those who have enthusiastically supported the movement without ever putting foot on stage or backstage. There are those, on the other hand, who have been critical, perhaps hypercritical, of local dramatics. More often than not, the major criticism has been that amateur productions lack the polish of professional stage shows; a corollary to this criticism is that local theatres lack the plushness of the Broadway, or big city, houses. Moreover, this criticism is frequently based upon a comparison of Little Theatre with the old-fashioned talent shows or high school productions.

The critics' views are generally expressed without any real appreciation of the tremendous obstacles which must be overcome before a Little Theatre can be established in a community. Indeed, the

*Information for this article was drawn from New Iberia newspapers of the past and interviews with numerous individuals involved in the Little Theatre movement.

presentation of a single play ranks as a major accomplishment for all concerned. On three separate occasions between 1923 and 1960, New Iberians have come together to organize a local Little Theatre which, while definitely staffed by amateurs, has on many occasions demonstrated an unmistakable touch of professionalism.

In the spring of 1923, a group of New Iberians, headed by Mrs. Walter Burke, organized the town's first amateur theatre. The first board of directors was composed of Katherine Craig, Mrs. Frederic Patout, Miss Lucy Gebert, E. J. Carstens and Donald Burke.

Directed by Mrs. Burke, the group's first performance, the presentation of two one-act plays: "The Giant Stair" and "Trysting Place", occurred at the New Iberia High School auditorium in June 1923. Starring in the "Giant Stair" were Mrs. John Holbrook and Mrs. Patout. The lead in "Trysting Place" was taken by E. J. Carstens, the man who would become "Mr. Little Theatre" of New Iberia by taking an active role in all three phases of the town's Little Theatre movement. Co-starring with Carstens in this Booth Tarkington effort were Edwin LaSalle, Mrs. Leonard Barrow, Myrtis Sealy, Carrol Martin and Amelia Pharr.

F. van Yeutter, who reviewed the play, commented that this initial production ensured the success of the movement in New Iberia. Actually, however, the local group would produce only two more shows before becoming inactive.

In September 1923, Mrs. Burke directed Mrs. Holbrook, Mrs. Donald Burke, Myrtis Sealy, Katherine Burke, Edwin LaSalle, Arthur Provost and Fred Fisher in Herbert Davies' "Cousin Kate." As would become standard with New Iberia Little Theatre productions, the reviewer reported "Real professionals could not have entertained the audience in a more pleasing manner."

In February 1924, the local players staged three one-act plays. Liz Mestayer,

Mrs. Albin Segura, Edwin LaSalle and Louis Broussard were cast in a tale of old Louisiana entitled "Andre Proposes." This was followed by "Mistress Penelope", which starred Nina Burke, John Newton Pharr, E. J. Carstens and Clyde Delahoussaye. The final "one-acter" of the evening was "The Maker of Dreams" and was performed by Dorothy Mitchel, E. J. Carstens and Clyde Delahoussaye.

Almost unknown to most followers of Little Theatre was the fact that the February productions would be not only the final plays of the season but also the end of the initial phase of the local movement. A lack of directors combined with the absence of a permanent house and dwindling attendance succeeded in sending the theatre movement into its first period of dormancy, a hiatus which would last 25 years.

In the spring of 1948 a mutual interest in Little Theatre brought together a group of Iberians who subsequently revived the local movement. In early April a general meeting was called at the Iberia Parish Courthouse and sufficient interest was displayed to warrant the organization of the "Iberia Little Theatre." The first board of directors included: E. J. Carstens, Mrs. James Wyche, Jr., Lee DeBlanc, Mrs. Lionel Kling, Mrs. John Abdalla, G. A. Ackal, Mrs. Harry Neighbours, Mrs. Randolph Roane, Jr., Bill Reynolds, Ed Boutte, Jr., Matt Vernon, Mrs. Owen Southwell, Keith Courrage, Mrs. Cenas Gaines and Richard Mire.

In the following weeks Ed Boutte was elected president, and plans for the first production "The Night of January 16th" were implemented. Meanwhile, a group of Little Theatre enthusiasts, under the direction of Jeanette Ackal, inaugurated the Iberia Little Theatre Workshop of the Air and broadcast dramatic sketches and monologues over the local radio station.

On December 14, 1948, the group presented "The Night of January 16th," in the courtroom of the parish courthouse. The play was directed by Mrs. Joffre

Murrel and starred Julie Louviere and Joe Valenti, Jr. The supporting cast included: Mrs. Charles Rader, Bill Reynolds, G. A. Ackal, Mrs. Preston Duhe, Guyton Watkins, Ed Boutte, Ward Tilly, Mrs. Joseph Valenti, Jr., Herman Hauser, Robert Lewald and Mrs. Rebecca Mann.

A reviewer noted that the revived Little Theatre's initial effort was immensely successful and "assured the group continued acceptance and growth." Indeed, the opinion was accurate and during the next several years, under the leadership of Presidents Boutte, G. A. Ackal and Mrs. Ruth Bourque, the organization flourished.

During subsequent seasons the public was treated to excellent performances of well-known plays, perhaps the most memorable being the local rendition of "Outward Bound." By 1952, however, the major problem for the local group became not only apparent but threatening—the lack of a playhouse. As the group acquired properties it became increasingly clear that suitable quarters for the Little Theatre would have to be found or the operations of the organization would have to be suspended. Unable to locate appropriate existing facilities, and financially unable to construct its own playhouse, the organization suspended activities in 1952.

The next revival of Iberia Little Theatre was only eight years in coming. In the spring of 1960, following the "freelance" production of "Plain and Fancy" for benefit purposes, a movement for Little Theatre revival began. The question of reorganization, however, finally focused on the single issue of whether or not the general public would support the movement.

In order to determine public reaction, the group decided to stage a "bonus" play. Under the direction of Mrs. Ruth Bourque, "Dulcy" was presented at the New Iberia High School auditorium in mid-May 1960. An overflow crowd signaled a favorable reaction to a Little Theatre revival.



The Carriage House

At a public meeting subsequently held at the Veterans Memorial Building a new board of directors was elected. They were: Lt. Clayton Milner, G. A. Ackal, Mrs. Ruth Bourque, Mrs. E. C. Alford, Mrs. Gussie Bordelon, John Holbrook, Eddie Garry, Joseph Valenti, Jr., Glenn Conrad, Mrs. Wilda LeJeune, Mrs. Carme Walker and Bobby Gordy.

Almost immediately the directors recognized the necessity of having a permanent playhouse, and a committee was therefore named to begin the search. Meanwhile, plans for the first season unfolded. Jeanette Ackal directed "The Glass Menagerie," and the play was presented in November on the stage of the Sugar Festival Building. The first season, which included a three-play schedule, was rounded out with "Biography" and "Great Big Doorstep" which were also presented on the Festival Building stage.

During the summer of 1961, a potential playhouse was found in an old drug warehouse, formerly a carriage house, on Julia Street. Through the efforts of countless people, plus the cooperation of city officials and businessmen, the old warehouse was transformed into "The Carriage House," home of the Iberia Little Theatre. In September 1961, only hours after the final electric connections were made in the building, the first production in "The Carriage House" was staged—"My Three Angels."

For the next eleven years, under the presidency of Glenn Conrad, Michael DeBlanc, Walter Dantzler, Rufus Marin, Jeanette Ackal and Michael Doumit, the

Little Theatre presented Iberians three plays a year. Hard work by innumerable supporters brought to the New Iberia stage a series of outstanding performances, ranging from the melodrama "East Lynn" to the highly dramatic "Lion in Winter."

By 1972, however, the playhouse fell victim to the automobile. The building was demolished and the site transformed into a parking lot. The loss of the playhouse effectively ended this third phase of Little Theatre activity in New Iberia. There is, however, no reason not to believe that, like the mythological phoenix, the movement will rise from its ashes and once again afford New Iberians an alternative to television and movies.

NOTES ON ATTAKAPAS

By Glenn R. Conrad

On June 24, 1780, Alexandre De Clouet, commandant of the Attakapas Post, informed Governor Bernardo de Galvez of the arrival of sixty Irish refugees from Fort Pitt. They informed De Clouet that their reason for fleeing was English laws discriminatory to Catholics. De Clouet reported that they wanted their children baptized. Until he had instructions from Galvez, he would feed, clothe and house them as best he could.

From Spain, *Archivos de Indes, Papeles Procedentes de Cuba*, Legajo 193 B, Folio 72. Microfilm on deposit at Southwestern Archives, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, Louisiana. Hereafter cited as PPC, with volume and folio numbers.

In a letter to Governor Bernardo de Galvez, dated February 26, 1780, Alexandre De Clouet, commandant of the Attakapas Post, reported that two English families named Ellis had abandoned their homes near Natchez and had moved to the Attakapas with approximately 100 slaves. He noted that their reason for migrating was fear of Indian reprisal for actions taken by the English against the red men. De Clouet noted that these families enjoyed an excellent reputation. Galvez later responded that he was delighted with the move of the Ellis families.

PPC 193 B:49vo.

On September 3, 1780, Alexandre De Clouet, commandant of the Attakapas Post, reported that three weeks of nearly incessant rainfall had ruined two-thirds of the tobacco crop, "which is the sole agricultural production of this post." He noted, however, that the inhabitants of the post were not overly depressed by the loss.

PPC 193 B:92.

PROSPERITY AND THE FREE POPULATION OF LAFAYETTE PARISH,
1850-1860: A DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW (1)

By Carl A. Brosseau

During the decade preceding the outset of the Civil War, Lafayette Parish was a predominantly rural and agrarian area dominated by a plantation economy. This region, which was at an agricultural crossroads, located on the fringes of the central Louisiana cotton belt and the Teche Valley "sugar bowl," experienced profound changes in its agricultural base between 1850 and 1860. During this decade, Lafayette Parish, which formerly had diversified agricultural production, became a leading producer of a single staple crop—rice—which was apparently the impetus for the rising prosperity of Lafayette Parish's free population. The effects of this prosperity, and, concomitantly, a rise in the overall standard of living, can be approached only after a statistical examination of the parish's free population.

The free population of Lafayette Parish during the twilight stages of the antebellum period was overwhelmingly white, Catholic,

and of Acadian descent. Most of these were yeomen farmers owning between one and five slaves. (2) Because of the agricultural base of the local economy, the parish was predominantly rural. In fact, less than nine percent of the total free population resided in Vermilionville, Lafayette Parish's commercial center.

During the 1850s, Vermilionville was a small commercial village housing artisans, such as blacksmiths, carpenters and merchants, who catered to the needs of Lafayette Parish's rural residents. These craftsmen prospered, reaping the benefits of the parish-wide economic boom. For example, in 1860, over twenty-five percent of the parish's carpenters owned property valued at \$700 or more. Similarly, over one-fourth of the community's blacksmiths possessed at least \$800 in landholdings. The region's artisans and merchants, however, were not the sole beneficiaries of prosperity.

Table A
Population Analysis

	1850	%	1860	%
whites	3337	95.70	4258	94.80
blacks	3	.08	24	.53
mulattoes	146	4.22	207	4.67
total	3486	100.00	4489	100.00

1. Statistical information used in this article has been derived solely from the following: Census Population Schedules, the Free Population, 1850. Louisiana, Vol. III, pp. 470-643. Census Population Schedules, the Free Population, 1860. Louisiana, Vol. III, pp. 730-848. Census Population Schedules, the Slave Population, 1850. Louisiana, Vol. III, pp. 455-546. Microfilm copies of these schedules are on deposit in Dupre Library, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, Louisiana.

2. Vaughn Baker, "Patterns of Slave Ownership in Lafayette Parish, 1850," *Attakapas Gazette*, X (September, 1974), 144-149.

Table B
Agricultural Labor Force: Free Population

	1850	%	1860	%
farmers	520	63.80	663	75.50
overseers	35	4.29	22	2.50
laborers	96	10.60	1	.10
total	651	78.69	686	78.10

*Percentage of the total parish work force.

Apparently fostered by the parish's remarkable increase in rice production, the size of the local farmers' landholdings increased dramatically. In fact, in the case of many small planters, plantations frequently quadrupled in size during the 1850s. The economic impact of the local rice boom is also reflected in the incorporation of the region's white, formerly landless, labor force—as well as several plantation overseers—into the ranks of the parish's yeomanry.

The rapid accumulation of property by Lafayette Parish farmers gave rise to an emerging agrarian middle class. In 1850, nearly sixty percent of the parish farmers owned less than \$800 in real estate. By 1860, however, nearly half of the area's farmers, forty-six percent, owned between \$800 and \$10,000 in real property. Moreover, forty-eight percent of the parish's farmers reported personal property holdings valued in excess of \$1,000. By 1860, therefore, control of a substantial amount of the parish's wealth, in terms of real estate, had come under the control of a burgeoning middle class (those owning real estate valued between \$800 and \$10,000).

Despite the region's evident prosperity, pockets of poverty existed in this relatively affluent society. For example, in 1860, 195 of the 650 farmers in Lafayette Parish (30.1 percent) owned real estate valued at less than \$100. The local school teachers, most of whom were tutors, were an especially impoverished group. In 1860, none of the parish's eighteen educators

owned any real estate; moreover, approximately 99 percent of the local teachers owned less than \$100 in personal property. A small group of East European Jews residing in Vermilionville (most of whom were peddlers) were also beyond the pale of prosperity. Members of all racial and ethnic groups in Lafayette Parish were included in these pockets of poverty; however, racial and ethnic minorities, especially the free black community, were not excluded from the benefits of the general prosperity.

Lafayette Parish's free black community was predominantly mulatto, probably the manumitted children and mistresses of local planters and their overseers. Although interracial marriage was prohibited, the cohabitation of whites, usually French immigrants, with mulatto women was not uncommon. Free black males were frequently artisans, especially carpenters, joiners and blacksmiths. Others were farmers or boardinghouse proprietors in Vermilionville. Many black freemen appear to have enjoyed the benefits of the general prosperity, as several mulatto families owned substantial amounts of real estate and personal property, including slaves. For example, in 1860, Arthemise Gangneux, a mulatto residing in Vermilionville, owned over \$1,000 in real estate, while Aline Gangneux, also a mulatto, owned four slaves.

Despite the affluence enjoyed by many free blacks and whites, little interest was

displayed in the formal education of the parish's children. The fact that education occupied a low rung on the society's scale of priorities is directly attributable to the region's agrarian economy, the dearth of jobs for the members of the educated minority who lacked family ties to the small circle of men controlling the commercial sector of the local economy, and, of paramount importance, the Acadians' tradition of informal, practical education.

The general apathy toward education is clearly reflected in the region's high illiteracy rate. For example, in 1850, over fifty-four percent of the white adult population was illiterate; by 1860, this figure had declined to approximately forty-eight percent. A similar decline in illiteracy was evident among free blacks, dropping from 100 percent to 74 percent. Conversely, the illiteracy rate among mulattoes increased from 54 to 98 percent. The

general trend, however, was a slight general decline in the parish's high illiteracy level, apparently as a result of the large influx of well-educated Americans, primarily from the Gulf Coast cotton states, and French political exiles.

Education's low priority in Lafayette Parish's scale of priorities was reflected in the virtual absence of public educational facilities. (3) Only one public schoolhouse, an academy established in 1842, operated in Vermillionville during the 1850s. The dearth of educational facilities, and thus the necessity of either hiring a tutor or sending children to boarding schools, coupled with the absence of job opportunities for educated children of yeomen farmers, made formal education an expensive luxury, enjoyed only by the planter and merchant classes. This is evidenced in the low percentage of school-aged children attending school. For example, in 1850, only 27.9

Table C
Ownership of Real Estate by Farmers

	1850	1860
\$ 0-99	182	196
100-199	23	10
200-299	12	26
300-399	15	24
400-499	13	33
500-599	10	22
600-699	11	32
700-799	6	13
800-899	7	28
900-999	6	7
1000-1499	49	98
1500-1999	25	37
2000-2999	38	43
3000-3999	27	20
4000-4999	18	20
5000-7499	36	33
7500-9999	5	8

percent of all free, educable children received a formal education. Ten years later, this figure declined by .4 of 1 percent.

Immigration played a crucial role in the development of Lafayette Parish in the 1850s. New settlers migrating westward from Mississippi, Alabama and the southern Atlantic seaboard states provided a majority of the region's artisans. Moreover, French immigrants, apparently fugitives from the 1848 revolution, provided numerous planters, merchants, artisans and tutors. Therefore, their influence was greater than their number would otherwise indicate. Furthermore, these immigrants displayed a greater desire to become permanent settlers than did their less numerous counterparts from New England and the Middle Atlantic States.

The roots of Lafayette Parish's prosperity during the 1850s can be traced to the region's large-scale production of rice. In 1850, the parish produced slightly more than one ton of this commodity;

however, by 1860, the annual parish rice harvest had increased to nearly 380,000 pounds, the third highest total in the state.

(4) Meanwhile, Lafayette Parish produced less than 5,000 hogsheads of sugar, one of the lowest totals among the "sugar bowl" parishes. (5) Moreover, in 1856, the region produced fewer than 4,000 bales of cotton, less than twenty-two parishes. (6) Thus, rice had become the economic lifeblood of Lafayette Parish.

The prosperity produced by the rice boom had profound repercussions in Lafayette Parish. First, Vermilionville artisans and merchants flourished financially. Second, an ever-increasing number of farmers acquired and developed new property; herein lie the seeds of an emerging class of small planters. Pockets of poverty existed despite the general affluence. Nevertheless, the relative ease of acquiring property allowed upward financial mobility for poor whites, free blacks, and immigrants.

4. Mildred Kelly Gion, "A History of Rice Production in Louisiana to 1896," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIII (April, 1940), 544-588.

5. J. Carlyle Sitterson, *Sugar Country: The Sugar Cane Industry in the South, 1753-1950* (Lexington, 1953), p. 49.

6. J. D. B. de Bow, ed., *De Bow's Review and Industrial Resources, Statistics, Etc.*, XXVI (1850). [Reprint: New York, 1967], p. 355.

THE LAST ISLAND STORM, 1888

By Ralph Earl Caffery

My father said, "It's only the tail end of a storm," but it happened to be a real West Indian hurricane that hit the low-lying marshy island on the Louisiana coast called L'Isle Dernier or Last Island.

In the summer of '88, forty-three years ago this past August, my father, who was very fond of fishing trips, took his three boys, a nephew, and an Italian sailor and started out from an inlet of Cote Blanche Bay in his sloop, the *Governor Claiborne*. His destination was Last Island, about sixty miles from this inlet near Franklin, Louisiana [Jaws or Little Bay].

The first night out we made [cast] anchor in Four League Bay about half way there. Before daylight we were aroused by a heavy squall of wind and rain, and the younger members wanted to return, but my father said it would blow over, so we proceeded to Last Island.

The wind was blowing strongly from the north-northeast and with only the jib as a sail, and that half reefed, we raced on at great speed with the wind astern, and the Italian sailor exhorting at regular intervals: "Blow San Antone." It wasn't many hours before he was singing another tune.

On arriving at Last Island my brother and I took our shotguns and proceeded along the eastern end of the island for several miles. We killed a few curlews and sand snipes and on our return to the sloop we noticed that heavy breakers from the Gulf were rolling over the low beach, and as far as we could see the Gulf was a boiling mass of foam as the wind hurled off the crests of each comber and threw it back over the next.

Fortunately, we had two heavy anchors and two, two-inch Manila cables. The last thing that my older brother and I accomplished with the aid of the sailor before the night set in was to row a cable's length ahead of the sloop and drop an extra anchor. Even at this beginning of the hurricane, it was hard rowing against the wind. We had anchored in a small bayou, called Village Bayou, that enters the island near its center. The island is thirty miles long and about one-half mile in width, fronting the Gulf.

All that Saturday night the hurricane blew with increasing velocity. My father, unable to conceal his anxiety, sat up and watched the compass. The wind, blowing at about 120 miles per hour, never varied from the north-northeast and was now blowing in gusts.

The island was covered with six feet or more of water from the rushing Gulf tide, and all day Sunday we watched a landmark on the island, a high wooden cross marking a grave, to reassure us that our anchors still held. That finally succumbed to the furious current from the Gulf, and from 3 p.m. until midnight we were uncertain as to our whereabouts. To add to our terror, the sullen boom of great Gulf breakers a short distance away constantly reminded us of our fate if the anchors or cables should fail.

The Italian sailor, who had consumed most of the contents of a pre-Volstead demijohn, was now by turns supplicating and then upbraiding his patron saints. Finally he stealthily emerged with a hatchet and was about to cut the cables under the apparently half-crazed impression that by

doing so we would drift across the bay to the Terrebonne coast. Fortunately, my father detected the sailor, and grabbing him by the collar forced him to drop the hatchet and threw him into the cockpit. For long hours afterwards the old sailor found oblivion in the jug.

My father, perceiving that the two-inch cables were fast wearing away against the gunwales, ordered the sailor to cut down the mast. My older brother had to finally finish the job, while being held by my father to prevent his being blown bodily into the sea. It was with the greatest difficulty that the boat was cleared of the mast, sail and boom in that mighty wind.

At midnight Sunday the wind veered to the southwest, and the boat began to bump on the sand as the Gulf tide receded.

It was with a feeling of great thankfulness that, after thirty hours of suspense and strain, we could go down into the little cabin and sleep, although half submerged in water in the bottom of the boat.

We must have appeared a prize wreck for pirates, as a party of men who had weathered the storm on the high end of the island paid us an early visit, but on seeing we were still alive, they sailed away.

We were marooned for three days after

the storm. Hundreds of cattle were lying drowned with their hoofs in the air along the beach near where our boat was lying high and dry and dismantled. A wide channel had been scoured through the island by the sea current.

Near the point where we anchored on Last Island, LaFitte, the pirate, once held sway, and within a stone's throw had stood the famous wooden hotel washed away in the great hurricane of '56 in which nearly 200 pleasure seekers of southern Louisiana lost their lives. This incident is vividly described by Lafacadio Hearn in his novel, *Chita*--a romance of Last Island.

A party of our friends and relatives came in search of us, and we were brought to Morgan City by lugger, and then by train to Franklin.

The country was as badly hit as the coast--great oak trees uprooted, houses unroofed and fields of sugar cane devastated. Remote from civilization, Last Island to this day is uninhabited. Only here and there in the distance can be seen large companies of pelicans standing motionless and erect. One could imagine that they were ghosts of bygone buccaneers, brooding in silence over their ancient domain.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANSE LA BUTTE SALT DOME

By Claude Kenneson

Salt production is Louisiana's oldest commercial industry. Long before the coming of the white man, the Indians of Central Louisiana were extracting the mineral from "salt pits" for use as an article of trade. In the 1700s the first French explorers procured it from salt licks in the northwestern portion of the state. Many of these exposed salt beds subsequently provided salt for the Confederacy during the Civil War. (1)

At the outset of the Civil War, however, the Confederate government's primary source of salt was the Avery Island salt dome, where rock salt was first discovered in 1862 at a depth of fifteen feet. (2) The Confederate Army depended heavily upon this rock salt for overland shipment, but in April 1863 the mine was destroyed by Union forces. The Avery Island mine was not reopened until 1869, when the first deep commercial shaft was sunk; in 1879 the American Rock Salt Mining Co. assumed control of the mine; and in 1899 International Salt Co. took over the works.

The successful mining operations at Avery Island gave rise to exploration of neighboring salt domes. In 1895 salt was discovered at Jefferson Island, Iberia Parish; in 1896 at Belle Isle, St. Mary Parish; in 1897 at Weeks Island, Iberia Parish; and in 1899 at Anse La Butte, St. Martin Parish.

Anse La Butte Salt Dome is located about two-and-a-quarter miles southwest of Breaux Bridge, along a winding road which intersects state highway 94 at the Cargill

Salt Company sign (near the Wanda Petroleum Refinery). The salt dome derives its name from a combination of depressions or coves (*anse*) and a conspicuous hill or knoll (*butte*), about 1,000 feet in circumference and rising as much as seventeen feet above the cove. (3)

The first official reference to Anse La Butte bears the date of April 4, 1893. On that day, Charles S. Babin, Jr. of Lafayette, Louisiana, was appointed special agent "to sell, rent, or manage the 'mines' of coal oil, sulphur, iron, gas, or whatever else may be found" on the lands of Mrs. Emma Pelletier and Honore Breaux. (4) The proprietors' sudden interest in Anse La Butte was generated by "considerable quantities of gas . . . escaping from a natural gas spring . . ." (5) Later that year, Paul Ledanois, with the aid of a machinist, attempted to drill an oil well near the dome, but had to abandon the project after encountering technical difficulties at a depth of fifty feet. In 1899, however, he sank an extremely shallow well, and was able to furnish a natural gas light (6 to 8 feet high) for a local gathering. In addition, later that year, Capt. Anthony F. Lucas sought unsuccessfully to exploit the petroleum resources of Anse La Butte; while drilling for oil, however, he discovered salt at a depth of 290 feet. (6)

The discovery of oil at Spindletop (Beaumont, Texas) in early 1901 gave rise to additional oil exploration at Anse La Butte. In the fall of 1901, C. F. Z. Caracristi, a geologist hired by the Anse La

1. Stanley J. Lefond, *Handbook of World Salt Resources* (New York, 1968), p. 6.

2. *Ibid.*; see also Edwin Adams Davis, *Louisiana: Its Horn of Plenty* (Alexandria, 1966), pp. 41-42.

3. Henry V. Howe and Cyril K. Moresi, *Geology of Lofoyatta and St. Martin Parishes*, Geological Bulletin No. 3. (Baton Rouge, 1933), p. 73.

4. Letter from Charles S. Babin to Leke B. Grow, Leke B. Grow Collection, Box 1, Southwestern Archives, University of Southwestern Louisiana.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Newspaper clipping dated 1923 and entitled "Revival of Oil Drilling in Lafayette Parish Seen; New Projects to Be Drilled Deep," Leke B. Grow Collection, Box 1.



The Cargill Plant

Butte Oil and Mineral Company, urged his employers to develop what he considered valuable deposits of not only petroleum and natural gas, but also salt. He reported a "salt deposit that can readily be estimated to have a minimum workable area of five acres, with a thickness of 300 ft., equal to approximately 40,000,000 tons of rock salt." His recommendations included the establishment of an evaporation salt plant. (7)

Immediately after the Caracristi report, the Moresi Brothers of Jeanerette, Louisiana, began drilling on the "Lucas tract" at Anse La Butte but did not report finding salt. The Martin Simpson Oil Well No. 1, however, located on top of the hill, found salt at depths of 391-570 and 578-790 feet. Anse La Butte Oil Co. Well No. 2 also encountered salt at depths of 283, 1,600 and 1,784 feet. (8)

In 1907, G. D. Harris reported on the "great salt mass at this place [Anse La

Butte], dominating the region" He recommended that "bringing the salt to the surface in the form of brine, then evaporating the same for salt, would be perfectly feasible." He further discouraged the idea of shafting, as this would prove too difficult. (9)

In spite of the Caracristi report and Harris' analysis no attempts were made to "mine" the salt until 1920. In 1920, the Lafayette Salt Co., whose plant was located on the Ambrose Begnaud tract, drilled a number of test wells in the northern portion of Flat Lake to determine the depth of salt in the area. One of the wells encountered salt at 160 feet, the shallowest depth yet recorded. Very little salt was obtained in the initial extraction attempt, however, for the wells caved in shortly after the commencement of operations. In 1920, a third well (this one successful) struck a 1,400-foot-thick salt bed at a depth of 200 feet. In 1927, the company abandoned the project

7. Dr. C. F. Z. Caracristi, Report of Dr. C. F. Z. Caracristi on the Holdings of the Anse La Butte [Ledanois] Oil and Mineral Co. Limited (Galveston, 1901), pp. 12, 25, 28.

8. Howe, *Geology of Lafayette*, pp. 88-89.

9. G. D. Harris, *A Report on the Geology of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1902), p. 95.

due to the high cost of production and because of competition from the Iberia Parish salt domes. The six-year enterprise had produced 30,173.51 short tons of table salt. (10)

The Star Salt Corporation, a Lafayette Salt Company rival, began manufacturing table salt in 1923. Its brine well, also located on the Begnaud tract, reached salt at 240 feet and continued to a depth of 1,369 feet. Unlike Lafayette Salt Co., however, its plant was not on Anse La Butte proper, but in Lafayette. The extraction process employed by the Star company was described as follows:

The brine was piped (wooden pipes) from their well at Anse La Butte to the plant in Lafayette and placed in large vacuum pans and the water evaporated. Steam from the sawmill (Baldwin Lumber Co. nearby) was utilized for evaporation. (11)

The company continued operations until 1930, when the plant was abandoned because of high production costs and declining salt prices. The total quantity of salt produced by the Star Salt Corporation amounted to 89,456.25 short tons. (12)

A total of 119,627.76 short tons of salt

had been extracted by the Star and Lafayette salt companies before their operations were suspended. Yet in 1933, Moresi & Howe expressed confidence that evaporated salt could again be manufactured commercially from Anse La Butte dome by the use of modern equipment. (13) This endeavor was to be undertaken by Gordy Salt Co. of New Iberia.

Gordy constructed a modern salt plant on Anse La Butte and launched production in 1941. Since its inception the physical plant and, concomitantly, salt production, have continued to expand. From 1941 to 1951, an average of 35,000 tons were extracted annually; from 1951 to 1960, an average of 45,000 tons a year; and from 1960 to 1971 an average of 55,000 tons a year. Between July 1971, when the plant came under new management—Cargill, Inc., a Minneapolis-based company (14), and 1976, the Anse La Butte salt mine has produced approximately 60,000 tons per year.

In this age of mineral depletion, it is reassuring to learn that there is an overabundance of salt at Anse La Butte. There will be jobs at this St. Martin Parish salt dome as far into the future as man can peer. As a matter of fact, a Cargill spokesman guaranteed the author that no shortage of salt is anticipated for at least several hundred years!

10. G. D. Herris, "Rock Salt: Its Origin, Geological Occurrences & Economic Importance in the State of Louisiana," *Geological Survey of Louisiana*, Bulletin No. 7 (Baton Rouge, 1908), pp. 88, 91; see also U. S. Geological Survey, Bulletin 429, p. 37.

11. Howe, *Geology of Lafayette*, pp. 88-91.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. Interview of Mr. Charles Norton, Cargill Plant Manager at Anse La Butte on December 9, 1976.

RECREATIONAL PURSUITS OF LAFAYETTE PARISH RESIDENTS, 1890-1899

By Nancy Tulloch Hock

The recreational pursuits of Lafayette Parish residents in the 1890s were varied and would delightfully fill a modern-day social calendar. Besides the usual activities which one would expect to find, such as balls, fairs, dances and picnics, there were excursions, professional and amateur theatricals, minstrels, circuses, lectures, sporting events and, of course, the region's distinctive *Mardi Gras* celebration. Lafayette was definitely not a sleepy little southern town tucked away in the bayou country, secluded from the rest of the world; the number of touring theatrical and minstrel troupes and circuses which played the town belie that idea. The community was quite interested in the affairs of the outside world and was thus greatly influenced by trends and crazes sweeping the country, such as bicycling, chewing gum, temperance, and a growing awareness of greater participation by women in activities away from hearth and home.

Balls, Private Parties, Clubs and Public Celebrations

During the 1890s, several types of balls were held at Lafayette—grand balls, (1) masked balls, fancy dress balls, for which the "people really wore full dress . . . laces, velvets, and elaborate gowns." (2) In 1890 and 1891, grand balls, open to the public, were held practically every month at J. B. Perez's Hall. In subsequent years, balls were usually held at Falk's Opera House;

in 1895, however, the Christmas and New Year's Eve balls were held at the Crescent Hotel.

Balls were usually sponsored by clubs or unions, such as the Knights of Labor, the Carencro Social Club, the Catholic Knights of America, the Brotherhood of Trainmen, Harmony Council No. 1055 of the American Legion of Honor, the Lafayette Brass Band, Morgan Lodge No. 317 and the Lafayette Fire Company. The young men and women of the town also occasionally organized dances. These dances were public events, though admission was occasionally by invitation only. For example, in 1893, Harmony Council extended 450 formal invitations to its annual ball. Such balls were frequently given for the benefit of the Lafayette Brass Band and the Carencro Street Lamp Fund; in addition, Lafayette High School was given the proceeds of two balls sponsored by the Drama Association of Scott and by the Southern Pacific Railroad employees.

Because of a dearth of new articles, little is known of similar activities in the black community. For example, in 1893, the *Lafayette Advertiser* noted that a Negro ball was held near Carencro; the ball, however, was mentioned only as the site of a shooting incident. (3)

An "impromptu" party or "raid," in which groups of young men banded together for unannounced visits to young ladies' residences, was apparently a favorite local pastime. The nature of the reception

1. A "grand ball" specifies a formal dance as opposed to a party at which the guests dance. It does not necessarily mean a private function; in fact, most "grand balls" were open to the public.

2. Joanna Williams Cornay, "A Survey of Amateur and Professional Theatrical Activity in Lafayette, Louisiana, from 1870 to 1920," (M. A. thesis, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1967), 48.

3. The *Lafayette Advertiser*, September 30, 1893.

given the "raiders," however, makes the impromptu nature of the event questionable. For example, in 1895, several youths assembled, donned white sheets and dominoes, and then wended their way to the home they were invading. "There they found a welcome nonetheless hospitable because host and hostess had been taken by surprise." The "ghostlike" invaders then indulged in singing and dancing until 11 p. m., when disguises were removed and refreshments, which the "surprised" host and hostess just happened to have on hand, were served. (4)

During these parties, guests often provided musical entertainment. One such party had an extensive program consisting of a cornet and piano duet, vocal solo, mandolin and piano duet, and a banjo and harp duet. The crowning event was the recitation of "Kismet" by one Professor King. (5) When not participating in impromptu "raids" during the spring and summer months, young people frequently devoted moonlit evenings to serenading and promenades.

Local women's organizations were also quite active socially. Progressive euchre parties were in vogue during the early part of the decade, as were "pink teas" and "mite meetings" (6) given by the Ladies Aid Society of the Methodist Church. Many such organizations were short-lived, but two Lafayette clubs enjoyed a lengthy existence—the Women's Club and the Century Club. The Women's Club, originally known as the Five O'Clock Tea Club, later became the Lafayette Women's Club, which is affiliated with the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs. The establishment of the club stemmed from a luncheon in 1897, during which one of the



The People's State Bank, 1891

guests, a San Antonio resident, described the clubs in her home town. As a result of interest generated by this address, the Lafayette Women's Club was organized shortly thereafter. (7) The central purpose of the club was eradication of want and distress among womankind. The organization's weekly meetings featured light refreshments, intellectual conversation, singing, music, reading and recitation. (8)

The Century Club, however, was the center of Lafayette's social activities for many years. Organized in 1896 with fifteen members, the club quickly doubled its membership. Very quickly two nights a month were designated "ladies evenings" for which an orchestra was present. The club also featured comfortable sitting and card rooms, which were occupied every evening by businessmen. In 1899, the Century Club sponsored a billiards tournament. (9)

4. *Ibid.*, April 26, September 13, 1890; March 2, 1895.

5. *Ibid.*, August 29, 1891.

6. "Mite" meetings were socials in which everyone brought a "little something" which was then given to charity. "Mite" refers to the widow's mite in the bible.

7. Harry Lewis Griffin, *The Attokapas Country* (New Orleans, 1959), pp. 172-173.

8. *Advertiser*, May 1, 1897.

9. *Ibid.*, March 4, 1896; April 15, 1899.

Weddings were also important social events. For example, a Jewish wedding in 1893 commanded two-and-one-half columns of the *Lafayette Advertiser* and was described as "one of the most notable events in the history of our local society." (10)

Then as now, the region's social calendar climaxed during the Yuletide season. New Year's Eve and Christmas have traditionally been celebrated with fireworks in Lafayette Parish. In 1890, the *Advertiser* mentioned that the holidays were regally celebrated with fireworks, but that there was not a single "disturbance" in the community. Three years later, however, a "pyrotechnic display" on Christmas night caused a fire. (11)

Bastille Day was celebrated in Lafayette until the middle of the decade. The last Bastille Day celebration was reported by the local newspaper in 1894. Businesses were closed for the day, and there was a parade with both American and French flags displayed. In 1893, the *Advertiser's* editor called for a Fourth of July celebration, but nothing was done until the following year, when a ball was held; nevertheless, Bastille Day remained the town's principal commemorative event. In 1895, however, the Businessmen's Association decided to celebrate the Fourth, a practice which endured during the succeeding years. In 1898, when patriotic fervor was rampant because of the Spanish-American War, Lafayette residents observed the Fourth of July with a flag-raising ceremony, and, to mark the event, the town's stores closed at 4 p. m. (12)

Picnics and Fairs

During the Gay '90s, picnics were

usually purely social events; however, they occasionally had political overtones. For example, annual picnics sponsored by the Farmer's Alliance between 1890 and 1893 featured speeches (at least one of which was in French) given by local politicians sympathetic to farmers. A stand was usually erected for the speeches and the ubiquitous brass bands, which played at intervals throughout the day. (13)

Politics and picnics were also intertwined in 1891 at a B.B.B.B. (Beef & Beer, Boodle Barbecue). This social was given under the auspices of the Progressive Lottery League "in disguise of a Grand Democratic Rally."

The *Advertiser*, an anti-lottery tabloid, was rather disdainful of this picnic and noted that the sponsors had failed to provide sufficient food for the patrons. The barbecue was attended by 1,000 to 1,200 people, a large turnout indeed, and thus the food shortage is hardly surprising. (14)

Some of the picnics were quite lovely and romantic. One such outing, held in 1891 on the banks of Coulee Mine, was attended by young people from Lafayette and its environs. Particularly delightful was a moonlight picnic given by the ladies of the Episcopal Guild under the beautiful oak trees at the home of Judge J. P. Parkerson. (15)

In 1896, Lafayette's young men gave a picnic at Doucet's Woods. Within a month of this outing, they formed the "Mystic Picnic Club" and sponsored a second picnic attended by "wagon loads" of people. (16)

Fairs, bazaars and ice cream socials were invariably held for the benefit of a church, usually the Catholic Church; these benefits occasionally lasted two days and featured outdoor amusements, theatrical and musical entertainment, fireworks and food. A "tombolas concert" was given at one

10. *Ibid.*, November 18, 1893.

11. *Ibid.*, July 7, 1894; June 25, 1893.

12. *Ibid.*, July 7, 1894; June 25, 1893.

13. *Ibid.*, September 13, 1890; September 28, 1891.

14. *Ibid.*, September 5, 1891.

15. *Ibid.*, May 23, 1891; July 22, 1893.

16. *Ibid.*, June 8, 1896.

bazaar by a "host of Lafayette's charming Belles." In 1894, the Mauriceville "Grand Fair" featured the presentation of a rifle to the best marksman and a balloon ascension. Two "colored" fairs, held for the benefit of the Catholic Church, were noted by the *Advertiser* in 1894 and 1898. (17)

Sporting Activities and Excursions

The most popular sports in Lafayette Parish during the 1890s were horse races, baseball, boxing, cockfights and bicycling. Other sporting activities were held, however. For example, a hunting match and a field trial for dogs, attended by several out-of-state residents, were held in 1890, but no further mention of similar events appeared in the *Advertiser* during subsequent years. Lawn tennis, played by the social aristocracy, was referred to as a novelty. Skating rinks were opened at Falk's Opera House and in Carencro in the middle of the decade. (18)

Horse racing was the rage in Lafayette Parish during the 1890s. Located about one mile southwest of the parish seat, Broussard's Race Track, the first in Lafayette Parish, was completed in November 1890. Races were held there nearly every week after that date, as well as at several other race tracks subsequently constructed in and around Lafayette, Carencro and Breaux Bridge. Purses ranged from \$100 to \$1,000. (19)

Bicycle and foot races were occasionally interspersed with the horse races. In 1893, a Welsh resident and a "sprinter of Lafayette" competed in a 75-yard dash at Broussard's track for a \$300 purse. (20)

Boxing was also quite popular during the first half of the decade. In 1891, after a performance by a traveling show at Falk's

Opera House, a sparring match between the bantam champion, "Kid" Wilson, and Lonley Brady was organized. This match introduced soft-glove boxing to the Lafayette area; however, Lafayette patrons generally felt that the match was too tame, being especially disappointed by the absence of a "knock out." Shortly thereafter, the Athletic Club was organized in Lafayette to sponsor boxing contests, the first being a contest between Joe Jackson and P. J. McAlister for a \$500 purse. Several other matches were subsequently sponsored by the club. The last reported bout was the colored lightweight championship of Southwest Louisiana, held in April 1893 for a \$100 purse. A few months later, the *Advertiser* announced that the Lafayette Athletic Club was for sale. No further notices of boxing matches were reported. (21)

The demise of boxing was overshadowed by the rise of baseball. During the summer months there was considerable baseball activity in each of the area towns. The names of most teams changed annually and the sport does not appear to have been well organized. Nonetheless, there were a few outstanding baseball events.

In 1891, the game between the Montez, Anse Burlichaux and Pont Breaux teams was held in Alex Delhomme's pasture in Scott. In preparation for the encounter, the grounds were mowed by machine. Following the seven-inning games, which ended in a draw, each team having scored twenty runs, a grand ball was held. (22) In anticipation of the ball ladies wore gala costumes to the game.

Women, however, were baseball players as well as spectators. In 1899, the "Bloomer Girls" played Pilett's team. The "Bloomer Girls" proved to be "good

17. *Ibid.*, August 3, 1890; November 24, 1894; January 15, 1896.

18. *Ibid.*, March 1, 1890; April 26, 1890; November 2, 1895.

19. *Ibid.*, November 1, 1890; Cornay, "Survey," p. 48.

20. *Advertiser*, April 12, 1893.

21. *Ibid.*, February 2, September 5, 1891; April 26, 1893.

22. *Ibid.*, September 8, 1891.

players but too weak to win," losing sixteen runs to ten. (23)

When baseball season ended, many rural Lafayette Parish residents turned their attention to cockfighting. The first cockfight reported by the *Advertiser* during the decade was held in 1894 at Alphonse Peck's pit. In 1895, twelve Lafayette fowls were "pitted" against Morgan City gamecocks at New Iberia for a \$225 purse. Lafayette roosters were the winners, four bouts to one. Cockfights were also the featured event of an excursion to Opelousas in 1896. (24)

Cockfights were not always advertised and for that reason it is difficult to obtain accurate information about them. Nevertheless, it is certain that they were patronized mainly by men, although it was "acceptable for women to go." (25)

Bicycling swept the country in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and Lafayette was by no means left behind. As early as 1894, the *Advertiser* announced that several new bicycles had arrived at local stores. The most popular model appears to have been the "Crescent." By the following year, and for several years thereafter, bicycles were mentioned regularly in the local newspaper. The *Advertiser* also followed the progress of several cross-country bicycle excursions. (26)

As mentioned earlier, bicycle races were sometimes held in conjunction with horse races; however, special bicycle races were occasionally held. For example, in 1895, a major bicycle race was held at Opelousas and special arrangements were made for transportation of Lafayette participants and spectators. (27)

"Crescent" tandem bicycles were introduced into Lafayette in 1896. This novel mode of transportation attracted much attention as two local doctors (Girard and Moss) went speeding through the principal streets of the town. Cycling was not a sexist sport, as women, usually young women, also rode bicycles. Some women evidently disapproved of women bicyclers, for the editor of the *Advertiser* noted that "it is intimated that the women who are opposing the bicycle are too old to ride." (28)

Another very popular activity, one covered extensively by the *Advertiser*, was the excursion. Excursions aboard special trains were made primarily between southwest Louisiana towns. These trains stopped periodically along the route in order to take on participants. The usual excursion sites were Opelousas, Morgan City, Thibodaux, Abbeville, New Iberia, Lake Charles, Shell Island, Rayne, New Orleans and Galveston, Texas. Most of these excursions were sponsored either by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen or the fire companies of the various excursion sites. Fairs were often held at the excursion site and were usually sponsored by the Fair Association of the particular city. For example, near the end of the decade, several excursions were sponsored by the Crescent Excursion Club of New Orleans. Lafayette was the site for these outings, which were usually highlighted by a baseball game at the Oak Avenue Park. (29)

Most excursions, however, had much more to offer participants than a baseball game. One excursion to Opelousas, sponsored by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, featured a foot race, greased pig

23. *Ibid.*, June 3, 1899.

24. *Ibid.*, March 24, 1894; May 25, 1895; June 13, 1896.

25. Cornay, "Survey," 50.

26. *Advertiser*, October 20, 1894.

27. *Ibid.*, June 1, 1895.

28. *Ibid.*, May 18, September 12, 1896.

29. *Ibid.*, August 12, 1899.



Falk's Mercantile and Opera House, ca. 1890

race, baseball game and ball, at which prizes were given to the best male and female dancers. Door prizes—a silver pitcher and a framed crayon picture of Jefferson Davis—were also presented. (30)

*Theatre, Minstrels, Circuses (31)
and Lectures*

Lafayette was not without a variety of professional entertainment. There was a

regular theatre season, lasting from mid-September through mid-May, during which a variety of shows were presented. The shows usually ranged from three to six per season and included drama companies as well as specialty acts. Melodramas and farces were the most popular kinds of plays touring the country during this period, and thus represent the type of shows most frequently presented in Lafayette.

Because of its proximity to New Orleans,

30. *Ibid.*, June 28, 1890.

31. For a comprehensive list of theatre activities, both professional and amateur, see Mrs. Corney's "Survey." However, as Mrs. Corney specifically mentions only five circuses as having appeared in Lafayette in the 1890s (two less than I encountered in my research), I have listed the circuses below.

1890—John Robinson's Circus

1891—Cooper and Carroll, New United Southern Show

1892—W. H. Harris and Nickel Plate Shows

1893—Sells Brothers Circus

1895—Wallace Shows

1896—The January 1, 1897 issue of the *Advertiser* noted that the circus had been well patronized at both performances during the previous week. However, because several issues prior to January 1 are missing, it is impossible to ascertain the name of the circus.

1897—Hummel Hamilton and Sells United Shows

which attracted impressive New York talent, Lafayette was on a regular theatrical circuit. Stage stars performed at Lafayette between major stops on their circuits. (32)

The following description of these itinerant performers appeared in the October 7, 1893 issue of the *Advertiser*:

The opera season is drawing near, and as Lafayette is one of the favored feeding grounds for the migratory portion of the human family, we can look for a good many—some of which are worth going to see, of course, while others are worth less.

In addition, Lafayette was treated to at least one minstrel show per year as well as several circuses, two railroad shows and Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show.

The local citizens were not just viewers, however. Several amateur theatrical shows were presented annually. The amateur productions were usually presented at Falk's Opera House, which was also used for meetings and dances. Occupying the upper floor of Falk's Mercantile, located on South Washington Street in Lafayette, the opera house, which was capable of seating 150 to 200 persons, was renovated over the years. (33) The walls were decorated with murals depicting scenes from plays and operas; however, the proprietors failed to replace the proscenium curtain, which never worked properly, crashing into the floor when lowered.

"The Count of Monte Cristo" best typifies the kind of play which was most popular in American theatre during the late nineteenth century, and it is appropriate that it was presented in Lafayette in 1890 and 1899. This melodrama was originally written by the French playwright Alexandre Dumas and was adapted freely for the American stage. "The Count of

Monte Cristo" was made famous in America by James O'Neill, father of playwright Eugene O'Neill, but it played in Lafayette without him, just as "Rip Van Winkle" played in the community at the end of the decade without its star performer, Joseph Jefferson.

Some stars made return engagements and were obviously local favorites. Maude Atkinson appeared in the melodrama "Woman Against Woman" in 1891 and returned in 1894 as the star of "Hazel Kirke," another melodrama. The latter play, the theatrical hit of the era, was written by Steele MacKaye. The Emma Warren Company made appearances in 1894 and 1895. Jenny Holman, billed as a Southern favorite, also appeared twice.

Lafayette's theatrical audiences were selective. In fact, they were occasionally quite critical. In 1893, a company presenting "On Hand," billed as the greatest comedy of the age, departed after one day because the "theatre going public failed to be on hand." The Otto H. Krause Stock Company was reported as failing to "give satisfaction anticipated," and in 1897 the Georgia Big Eight, a minstrel troupe, was criticized as "a minstrel aggregation of cheap wit . . . perpetrated . . . on the public here two nights this week. The last night they were given an antiseptic reception interspersed with over due hen fruit." (34)

The editor of the *Advertiser*, however, occasionally admonished audiences for not showing proper cultural appreciation. For example, a concert by the Schubert Symphony Club and Lady Quartette was much touted in the newspaper as "the delight of refined audiences." The following issue regretted that there had been few present for the concert and that while the poor attendance might be excused because of inclement weather, the restless spirit of a number of the "auditors" could not. On another occasion, after a concert by

32. Corney, "Survey," 17, 30.

33. J. Philip Dismukes, *The Center: A History of the Development of Lafayette, Louisiana* (Lafayette, 1972), p. 26; Corney, "Survey," 14, 15.

34. *Advertiser*, March 22, 1893; December 22, 1894; January 23, 1897.

Mrs. Eugenie Derbes, the editor sadly noted that "we need to cultivate a higher appreciation of music in Lafayette." (35)

Many shows were advertised for their "clean" subject matter. Long's Artistic Pavilion Show and Hichman Comedy Company was billed as "altogether chaste and proper." In addition, "Jane," Frohman's comedy, possessed "no risque situation and no double entendres." (36)

There is some evidence, however, that spicier shows were also appreciated by at least some of the public. On Demcember 22, 1894, the *Advertiser* reported that:

The Caravan of Midway Plaisance that took Lafayette by surprise last Tuesday succeeded in squelching an admission fee from a goodly number of our young as well as more mature citizens. The show was a miserable disappointment to all those who either had to 'attend a lodge meeting' or 'set [sic] up with a sick friend.'

During the following week, the editor wrote that the advance agent of the Midway Plaisance Company had been in town and said that the company was on its way to Lafayette and was not to be confounded with the troupe which had visited that community during the previous week and had given such a disappointing performance. Among the acts promised were:

Nantch Dancing-Girl Direct from
the World's Fair Midway

Ida Daley--Serpentine and
Highland Fling Dancer

Dolly Marjanette--Champion High
Kicker and Skirt Dancer

Whether or not the troupe actually arrived and performed, however, cannot be ascertained, as no subsequent report appeared in the newspaper.

On March 9, 1895, one line appeared in the local paper advertising a performance of Duncan and Clark's Female Minstrel Show. A subsequent issue contained the following report and, while it does not mention the minstrels explicitly, it obviously refers to them.

Front row seats were at a premium last Sunday night at the Opera House. The performance was of a highly legitimate order...that's why so many of our bald-headed friends felt no reticence whatever about attending. They knew before hand what to expect and so did not run any risk of meeting with disappointment.

In 1895, one Professor Hillyer, wizzard, and the Boston Specialty Company presented a "Gift" entertainment, consisting of novelty acts interspersed with a raffle; the performance was highlighted by the presentation of gifts to each spectator. A similar show--Bancroft's European Entertainers and Grand Gift Carnival, which appeared in Lafayette in 1899--was advertised as having "amazing wonders" and no magic. But again, this production's main attraction was the distribution of presents. (37)

Other theatrical events included "Blind Tom," a black pianist called "a phenomenal idiot who gives expression to the one light of his soul--music," and "Mrs. General Tom Thumb," the "celebrated little lady and her carefully selected coterie of entertainers," the six smallest people in the world, who were on their "Farewell Tour." (38)

35. *Ibid.*, January 26, February 2, 1894; October 30, 1897.

36. *Ibid.*, February 21, 1891; January 19, 1895.

37. *Ibid.*, March 23, 1895; April 22, 1899.

38. *Ibid.*, February 21, 1891; Ducmbar 1, 1894.

The New York Humpty Dumpty Company, who presented "Humpty Dumpty on a Farm," was much deserving of pity. This troupe not only had the misfortune to be in such a play, but were stranded in Lafayette when their treasurer absconded with their funds. Finally, they were snowbound in Lafayette during a record-setting fourteen-inch snowfall. (39)

Amateur theatricals were frequently presented for the benefit of a charity, church or the local high school. These productions were either full-length plays, such as "A Tramp's Adventure," or "True to the Last," performed for the benefit of "a lady in distress," (40) or variety programs consisting of vocal and instrumental music and tableaux. Balls were frequently held afterward.

In 1893, the Dramatic Education Association was organized for the benefit of the high school. As their first performance, the Association presented the French drama "Une Mere," performed by the Breaux Bridge Literary and Gymnastic Association. (41) In 1895, another dramatic association was organized with twenty members for the purpose of giving performances for charity.

The local French culture was little reflected in local theatre. Two notable exceptions were the above-mentioned Breaux Bridge group, which also presented three, one-act French plays in September 1894, and the Ile Pilette School, which brought a production of the French comedy "Le Parvenue" to Lafayette in October 1894.

Brass bands were another source of popular entertainment; the Breaux Bridge and Scott brass bands were very much in demand. Lafayette, however, apparently failed to organize a brass band. A concert was held in 1891 for the band's benefit, but

the proceeds derived from this performance must have been minimal as no further reference was made to a band until 1895, when the *Advertiser* published a cartoon sketch of an automatic brass band beneath the caption: "Lafayette's Only Hope for a Brass Band;" however, the following issue of the newspaper reported that a brass band had been formed. If indeed this band was organized, it was short-lived, for additional brass bands were organized in 1898 and 1899. (42)

Minstrel shows visited Lafayette throughout the 1890s. "Minstrelsy" was described in the *Advertiser* as "the most democratic of all amusements." The Arlington Minstrels were advertised in 1894 as "all white" and "their delienetion [sic] of colored characters was much more appreciated than that of genuine colored performers." (43)

In addition to the professional minstrels there were local amateur productions as well. In 1896, the Lafayette Minstrel Company performed under the direction of Professor Frank Howard, a professional minstrel man who traveled from town to town organizing and directing home-talent minstrel shows. Another such man, George Wilson, appeared in 1898. Wilson was an organizer of lady minstrels, but ran into trouble because so many of Lafayette's young women were out of town. As a consequence, Wilson decided to use young men in short dresses instead. The editor of the *Advertiser* added this note: "Mr. Wilson came to us well recommended both as to character and ability." (44)

The most ambitious amateur minstrel show was the Black Diamonds. This troupe was organized by a group of local youths who intended to tour neighboring towns in order to raise money for a proposed new high school. It was noted

39. *Ibid.*, February 18, 1895.

40. *Ibid.*, March 15, 1890.

41. *Ibid.*, May 13, 1893.

42. *Ibid.*, September 26, 1891; March 9 and March 16, 1895.

43. *Ibid.*, January 21, 1899; January 20, 1894.

44. *Ibid.*, April 11, 1896; January 22, 1898.

with great pride that they had their costumes made in New York. The troupe met with great financial success. (45)

During the 1890s, seven different circuses appeared in Lafayette, with the W. H. Harris and Nickel Plate Shows appearing twice in the same year. In 1899, a circus was not booked for Lafayette, but one was booked at Crowley. Over 100 Lafayette residents, however, attended the show at the Acadia Parish seat of justice. (46)

In addition to circuses, two railroad shows were presented at Lafayette. J. F. Wood's New Allied Railroad Shows appeared in 1890 and, in 1895, Colonel G. W. Hall's New United Railroad Show arrived at Lafayette in their own special train. The main attraction of the latter show was a balloon ascent and parachute leap, along with a European menagerie museum and "arenic carnival." (47)

Lectures

A variety of people lectured to the public, in 1893, one Mrs. Pharr and one Mrs. Snell of Mississippi lectured on temperance at the Lafayette Parish Courthouse. It was reported as "something of a novelty in Lafayette.... The Ladies proved to be . . . interesting speakers . . . and had a display of penetration and wit which created considerable amusement for the audience.... We hope that good may result from the meeting, but think it doubtful." By 1895, a Women's Christian Temperance Union chapter was framed under the tutelage of Miss Belle Kearney, "the Frances Willard of the South," a month after Luther Benson had lectured at the courthouse and succeeded in securing a number of temperance pledges from several well known local

citizens. Following the organization of Lafayette's WCTU chapter, a front-page column of the *Advertiser* was devoted to temperance news. The last mention of temperance or the WCTU by the local paper appeared in 1897. (48)

Other popular lectures treated the Confederacy and the "Lost Cause." In 1894, General G. B. Gordon delivered his famous lecture, "The Last Days of the Confederacy" at Opelousas and drew a party of men from Lafayette. (49) Also of great public interest was a lecture given by "Little Washington," a black child prodigy. (50)

Mardi Gras

The first written record of the observance of Mardi Gras in Lafayette is dated 1869. Not until 1896, however, did Fat Tuesday again claim prominence as a local social event. Nevertheless, there is evidence that there were sporadic celebrations during the intervening years, as in 1895, when the *Advertiser* mentioned a Mardi Gras parade. The Mardi Gras celebration of 1897 was Lafayette's initial celebration of the holiday in the New Orleans manner. The Lafayette festivities featured a street pageant, royal ball and a king and his court.

In order to ensure the success of the festivities, the king of the Lafayette celebration, who bore the title of "Attakapas," issued an edict commanding all of his loyal subjects to decorate their homes and close their stores for the day. (51) In real life, "Attakapas" was the "famed 'Bedon' (Cajun for High Hat) Judge George Armand Martin, physician, planter, judge, solon, raconteur, genial gentleman

45. *Ibid.*, January 21, 1893.

46. *Ibid.*, November 18, 1899.

47. *Ibid.*, January 18, 1890; February 18, 1895.

48. *Ibid.*, February 18, 1893; March 9, 1895; March 20, 1897.

49. *Ibid.*, October 20, 1894.

50. *Ibid.*, May 6, 1899.

51. Mario Mamalakis, *Lafayette, Acadians, Mardi Gras* (Lafayette, 1959), p. 5; Griffin, *Attakapas Country*, p. 175; *Advertiser*, March 2, 1895; February 20, 1897.

and scholar." (52)

According to Harry Lewis Griffin, a Lafayette Parish historian, the Carnival spirit seems to have subsided after 1897, for there was no subsequent, formal celebration until 1927. (53) Though the festive spirit waned, the community observed Mardi Gras after 1897. In 1898, Lafayette residents prepared to observe the holiday by organizing a parade. These events, however, proved to be a miserable failure. Shortly after Mardi Gras, the *Advertiser's* editor expressed great distress at the poor turnout and said it was a "big disappointment" because everyone was "sad and gloomy . . . the town deserted." Nevertheless, plans were afoot for a celebration for the following year, and the editor claimed that he had already subscribed large amounts of money for this purpose. In addition, he admonished his readers for the poor attendance, stating "we have here all that is necessary to entice strangers to visit us and at the same time keep our people at home." In a related article it was noted that 289 Lafayette residents had attended the New Orleans carnival, while 454 participated in the New Iberia celebration. (54)

A Mardi Gras Ball was held in 1899, but there is no reference to a parade or king. In January, the *Advertiser* speculated that a subsequent Mardi Gras ball, held at Falk's Opera House, would be a stylish affair and

announced that B. Falk's mercantile store would receive a "full assortment of costumes." The ball was sponsored by the newly formed Lafayette Fire Department for the benefit of the "Bell Tower." A meeting was held in late February to organize the following year's celebration. (55)

Leisure time activities in Lafayette Parish during the 1890s were diverse and seem typical of the United States in general. The area's French heritage seems to have been less influential than one would at first assume. It is true that the *Advertiser* printed a portion of each issue in French and that an occasional political speech was given in French, but very little French culture was reflected in the local theatricals, and the Fourth of July celebration quickly edged out Bastille Day after 1895. Mardi Gras is presently the best-known and most popular local French cultural event, but, as noted above, this celebration did not reach its peak in Lafayette until after the turn of the century.

Dancing and music were a part of almost every activity and horse racing was by far the most popular sport. Bicycling, excursions and fondness of melodramas typify the era. It seems safe to conclude that the leisure time of the residents of Lafayette Parish was spent in a most enjoyable manner.

52. Griffin, *Attakapas Country*, pp. 173-178; Mamalakis, *Mardi Gras*, p. 5.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 75: 5.

54. *Advertiser*, February 5, February 26, 1898.

55. *Ibid.*, January 7, January 21, February 25, 1899.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Nathan	5	Son		La.	Europe	Europe
Harry	3	Son		La.	Europe	Europe
Courtois, Marianne	67		Grocer	France	France	France
Robinson, Horace	30		Carpenter	La.	Va.	La.
Mary	21	Wife	Boarding	La.	Mo.	La.
John	2	Son		La.	La.	La.
Fannie	6m	Daughter		Texas	La.	La.
Burke, J. L.	46		Livery Stable	N. J.	Ireland	Ireland
Walter	13	Son		La.	N. J.	Ireland
Ellen	12	Daughter	At School	La.	N. J.	Ireland
William	10	Son	At School	La.	N. J.	Ireland
Philicia	9	Daughter		La.	N. J.	Ireland
Pamela	7	Daughter		La.	N. J.	Ireland
Clara	6	Daughter		La.	N. J.	Ireland
Porteous	4	Son		La.	N. J.	Ireland
Boyer, P.	48		Tailor	France	France	France
Julia	24	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Delbuono, Frank	39		Grocer	Italy	Italy	Italy
Rosa	12	Daughter	At School	Italy	Italy	Italy
Catherine	9	Daughter		La.	Italy	Italy
Frank	70	Father	Retired Physician	Italy	Italy	Italy
Rosaline	57	Wife	Housekpr.	Italy	Italy	Italy
Margaret	27	Daughter	Assistant	Italy	Italy	Italy
Armina	23	Daughter	Asst. in Grocery	Italy	Italy	Italy
Rosa	21	Daughter	Asst. in Grocery	Italy	Italy	Italy
Michael	18	Son	Clerk	Italy	Italy	Italy
Grace	13	Daughter	At School	Italy	Italy	Italy
Bahon, Charles	39		Shoemaker	France	France	France
Amelia	37	Wife	Housekpr.	France	Germany	France
Fannie	3	Daughter		La.	France	France
Charles	7	Son		La.	France	France

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Bernard, John	39		Blacksmith	France	France	France
Mary	39	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Lawrence	13	Son	At School	France	France	France
Elizabeth	5	Daughter		La.	France	France
Sonnemann, Charles	45		Carriage Repairs	Germany	Germany	Germany
Louisa	32	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Germany	Switz.
George	15	Son	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Matilda	13	Daughter	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Frederick	11	Son	At School	La.	Germany	La.
Ella	8	Daughter		La.	Germany	La.
Estelle	5	Daughter		La.	Germany	La.
Christbauer, A.	51		Gardner	Germany	Germany	Germany
Anna	37	Wife	Wash & Iron	Germany	Germany	Germany
Willie	15	Son	Laborer	La.	Germany	Germany
Anna	12	Daughter	Cook	La.	Germany	Germany
Charnette	10	Daughter	Nurse	La.	Germany	Germany
Koch, Henry	18		Grocer	La.	Germany	La.
Clare, Charles	52		Butcher	Switz.	Switz.	Switz.
Josephine S.	40	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Ophelia	16	Daughter		La.	Switz.	France
Charles	12	Son	At School	La.	Switz.	France
Rosa	10	Daughter	At School	La.	Switz.	France
Albert	7	Son		La.	Switz.	France
Rene	4	Son		La.	Switz.	France
Etienne	37	Brother	Butcher	Switz.	Switz.	Switz.
Kotch, Mary M.	45		Housekpr.	La.	Germany	Switz.
Adolph	13	Son		La.	La.	Germany
Grousset, Aindroise	19		Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Mary	9m	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Bonsignes, A.	33	Mother	Seamstress	La.	France	La.
Alexan	40	Husband	Clerk	France	France	France

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Gabriel Enad	21	Son	Baker	La.	France	La.
Gankendorff, Mary	16	Son	Confectioner	La.	France	La.
Henry Amele	58	Son	Midwifery	Europe	Europe	Europe
Pesson, Gustave	21	Son	Blacksmith	La.	Europe	Europe
Constance	17	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	Europe	France
Louis	28	Gen. Mer.	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Edmund	24	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Ellie	7	Son		La.	La.	La.
McAllister, G. L.	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Pointes, Aimes	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Malanee	1	Son		La.	La.	La.
Charlie	48	Boarder	Sewing Machine Agt. Hotel Prop.	N. H.	N. H.	N. Y.
Bazus, Laurent	44	Daughter		La.	Spain	Spain
Marie	27	Son		La.	La.	France
Alline	47	Wife	Barber	La.	La.	France
Louis J.	43	Daughter	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Serrett, L. P.	20	Son	Assistant	La.	France	France
Mary	11	Wife	Hotel-Livery Stable	La.	France	France
John	48	Son	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Leon	33	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Tolson, J. E.	12	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Serrett, Gustave	11	Boarder	Clerk	Miss.	Ala.	Ky.
Boutte, Henry	23	Boarder	House Repairs	La.	La.	La.
Indest, Joseph	69	Boarder	Hostler	La.	La.	La.
Bertha	30	Helper	Asst. Postmaster	Mo.	Alsace	?
Delwin? Abe	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	?	La.
Marx, Emile	19		?	Md.	Hanover	Va.
Pauline	30	Wife	Dry Goods Merchant	Paris	France	France
	30		Housekpr.	Alsace	Alsace	Alsace

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Lucie	2	Daughter		La.	Paris	Alsace
Marquet, P.	48		Hotel Prop.	France	France	France
Aeteur?	58	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Revard, Antoine	65	Boarder	Barkeeper	France	France	France
Brunel, Joseph	30	Boarder	Hotel Agt.	France	France	France
Indest, Felicite	54		Dry Goods Merchant	Europe	Europe	Europe
Cugenheim, Hayem	56		Dry Goods Merchant	France	France	France
Augustine	30	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Blanche	9	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Cugenheim, A.	26	Nephew	Clerk	France	France	France
Cugenheim, Charles	24	Nephew	Clerk	France	France	France
Cugenheim, Paul	17	Nephew	Clerk	La.	France	Germany
Saugay, Charles	29	Boarder	Clerk	La.	France	Ireland
Couzet, Leon	48		Gen. Mer.	France	France	France
Alexine	39	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Fourgine, Charlotte	66	Mother		France	France	France
Vuellemot, Adrien	67		Grocer	France	France	France
Hirna	46	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Davis, Jacob	38		Dry Goods Merchant	Poland	Poland	Poland
Alice	29	Wife	Housekpr.	Alsace	Alsace	Alsace
David	8	Son		La.	Poland	Alsace
Bertha	6	Daughter		La.	Poland	Alsace
Carrie	5	Daughter		La.	Poland	Alsace
Fannie	3	Daughter		La.	Poland	Alsace
Ether	2	Daughter		La.	Poland	Alsace
Alphonse	4m	Son		La.	Poland	Alsace
Pilet, Emerite	38		Millenary	La.	Bordeau	La.
Auguste	9	Son		La.	Switz.	La.
Elizabeth	8	Daughter		La.	Switz.	La.
James	24	Stepson	Works at Salt Mine	Switz.	Switz.	Switz.
Suberbielle, B.	50		Baker & Grocer	France	France	France

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Matilda	37	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Mary	10	Daughter	At School	La.	France	La.
Paul	9	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
Auguste	7	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
Anna	5	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Louise	3	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Henry A.	8m	Son		La.	France	La.
Verrier, V.	47		Barber	France	France	France
Caleni	24	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Spain	Spain
Alice	15	Daughter	Assistant	La.	France	La.
Marie	13	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Anita	6	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Hortense	2	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Eleonore	1	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Stewart, James	42		Dentist	N.Y.	N.Y.	N.Y.
Helen C.	30	Wife	Housekpr.	N.Y.	Va.	N.Y.
August	4	Son		La.	N.Y.	N.Y.
Hattie G.	13	Daughter		N.Y.	N.Y.	N.Y.
Schreiner, Jacob	56		Dentist	Penn.	Phil.	Phil.
Mary E.	56	Wife	Housekpr.	Md.	Vt.	Md.
Mills, Richard	29	Boarder	Druggist	La.	Phil.	La.
Siruguey, Joseph	49		Machinist	France	France	France
Robert, Joseph	44		Confectioner	Spain	Spain	Spain
Dolores	32	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Albert	9	Son	At School	Havana	Spain	La.
Marie	1	Daughter		La.	Spain	La.
Lacurse, Jr.	42		Shoemaker	France	France	France
Elizabeth	60	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Loula	5	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Myers, Semour	62			France	France	France
Rosier, Pear	63		Tanner	France	France	France

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Elvia	21	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Sordelet, Albert	3	Grandson		La.	La.	La.
Landry, Cleophas	27		Works at Mill	La.	La.	La.
Josephine	26	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Clebert	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Clara	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Cecilia	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Bulres, Theresa	52		Housekpr.	La.	France	France
Delor, Aimée	25	Stepdaughter	Wash & Iron	La.	La.	La.
Bernard	1	Son		La.	La.	La.
Anatol	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Bulres, William	13	Grandson	At School	La.	La.	La.
Migues, Eliza	40		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Migues, Ernest	32		Baker	La.	La.	La.
Victoria	23	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Noel	2	Adopted Son		La.	?	?
Boole, Paul	16	Orphan	Job Work	La.	La.	La.
Pesson, Anna	23		Housekpr.	La.	France	Germany
Andre	28	Husband	Pilot on Boat	La.	France	France
Louise	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Mehan, John	37		Telegraph Oper.	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland
Mary L.	35	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	?	?
Marry Ann	10	Daughter	At School	La.	Ireland	La.
John	8	Son		La.	Ireland	La.
Agnes	6	Daughter		La.	Ireland	La.
Louise	5	Daughter		La.	Ireland	La.
Shim, Frank	38		Sawyer	La.	N.J.	La.
Camilla	34	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Mary E.	12	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Frank	11	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Josephine	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.

[To Be Continued]

CANADIAN PASSPORTS, 1681-1752. Edited by E. Z. Massicotte. (New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1975. 150 pp. Index. \$12.50.)

The Canadian beaver trade played a major role in the development of Canada. Much prized in Europe where they were used to make hats, beaver pelts were sought by legitimate and illegitimate traders alike. The former, called *voyageurs*, were empowered by a *conge de traite*, or trade passport, to purchase pelts from certain Indian tribes. The latter, the celebrated *coureurs de bois*, were really smugglers who risked imprisonment aboard the galleys if caught trading.

This little volume lists and abstracts, in chronological order, the *conges* granted by the governors-general of Canada from 1681 to 1752. The passports yield much information since they usually indicate very precisely where the grantee was allowed to trade, with what tribe, and with how many canoes and how many men.

Trade passports were valuable assets which could be sold. In fact, they were often granted to needy people, especially widows, so that they might sell them to traders at the standard rate: 1000 pounds. The *conges* listed in this volume occasionally record such transactions. Some of the passports have nothing to do with trade but simply authorize someone to travel or to bring supplies to distant posts and missions.

The picture which emerges is one of increasing economic activity carried on despite great hardships so that *Canadian Passports* makes a valuable contribution to the economic history of New France. But it is also a valuable aid for the Louisiana genealogist, especially as its index is replete with such common Louisiana names as Doucet, Ducharme, Gaudet, Lafleur, Lalonde, Saint-Germain, and Saint Martin.

University of Southwestern Louisiana

Mathé Allain

A LIFETIME ON DEADLINE: SELF-PORTRAIT OF A SOUTHERN JOURNALIST. By George W. Healy, Jr. (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Co., 1976. 294 pp. \$12.50.)

Anyone who becomes editor of a major metropolitan newspaper will, in the normal course of events, meet the powerful, the rich, the leaders and the rogues. George Healy, Jr., editor of the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* has given us a chronicle of what life is like for such an individual; from his days at the University of Mississippi, when William Faulkner was a postal employee to the days of Richard Nixon, Healy reported and occasionally took part in the momentous events of recent American history.

Healy repeats the famous story about Faulkner's comment upon leaving the employ of the postal service. Faulkner commented, "You know, all my life I probably will be at the beck and call of somebody who's got money. Never again will I be at the beck and call of every son of a bitch who's got two cents to buy a stamp."

Healy also covered Huey Long. Unlike T. Harry Williams, Long's biographer, Healy maintains that the impeachment articles against Huey were valid. Healy also has biting comments on another colorful Louisiana politician-Jim Garrison.

Healy's experiences, however, transcend the realm of Louisiana politics. During World War II, he served as director of the domestic branch of the Office of War Information. He also attended many important meetings of heads of state during and after the "War Years." Regardless of his position, Healy was an innovative newspaperman until his retirement in 1972.

Because this autobiography mentions so many people, it reads like a recent volume of *Who's Who*. In fact, Healy's social circles were so prestigious that one gets the impression, at times, that his autobiography is little more than a social register.

For those who wish to review the life of a concerned newspaperman, this volume should be satisfying. Among the people one will meet in the pages of this volume are the following: Oscar K. Allen, Theodore Bilbo, Winston Churchill, General Jimmy Doolittle, Dwight Eisenhower, William Faulkner, Huey Long, Richard Nixon and just about anyone who was "somebody" from Healy's earliest recollections—William Howard Taft was "a very fat man standing on a handstand in one of the small parks on the bluff [Natchez] speaking to what seemed an enormous crowd"—to the present, of which Healy says, "Retired, I am. Inactive, I am not."

University of Southwestern Louisiana

Allen E. Begnaud

YOUTH IN ACADIE: REFLECTIONS ON ACADIAN LIFE AND CULTURE IN SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA. By George Arceneaux. (Baton Rouge, La.: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1974. 100 pp. \$3.95.)

Youth in Acadie by George Arceneaux is a charming little volume of personal recollections of his early life on the family farm in Southwest Louisiana at the turn of the century. It is, above all, "a portrayal of the Acadian people and an account of their customs," as expressed by the author, whose lineage can be traced to Acadia.

The first three chapters, based on Bona Arsenault's *Acadie des Ancetres*, deal entirely with the history of the Acadians from their first efforts to colonize Acadia to their arrival in Louisiana. The following chapters are devoted to a series of sketches depicting life on a cotton farm, a life reminiscent of the "frontier days." Filled with personal anecdotes relating to his own family, the author describes in detail farming practices, daily chores, family reunions, recreation, schooling and religious upbringing. There is an unmistakable nostalgia for "the good old days," for the simple wholesome country life which he experienced in his family home near Carencro. Seen in retrospect through the rosy glasses of his memory, the spartan life on a subsistence farm, with its hardships and many discomforts, becomes a wonderful experience in self discipline and an inspiration in later years.

Proud of his Acadian ancestry, the author makes numerous allusions to the similarities which exist between the Louisiana Acadians and their forebears of Acadia. His father, like his grandfather, and his father before him, was a hard working, thrifty farmer. His father's small farm which provided practically all the necessities of life was essentially as it had been in the past: a family operation. Depending on his children for many of the chores, his father, who was seldom aided by outside help, performed all the difficult tasks alone. Strict but just, Father Arceneaux taught his children discipline and self-reliance, while his wife provided leadership, guidance, understanding and lent a certain elegance to their otherwise drab and modest surroundings. Affection and respect for his parents and for his elders abound in this book which is above all an apology of Acadian family life.

Although subjective in nature, this somewhat idyllic portrayal of the Acadians and their life style is nonetheless a valuable collection of reminiscences and recorded facts which may prove interesting to laymen and scholars alike.

University of Southwestern Louisiana

Jacqueline Voorhies

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

UTILIZED THE GAS*
HOW AN INVENTIVE LAFAYETTE MAN SOLVED A PROBLEM

Contributed by Mary Alice Fontenot

What first drew attention to the possibility of oil at Anse La Butte was the presence of gas. The earth on the Butte was porous and spongy and a hole dug anywhere on it filled with gas whith (sic), when ignited[,] burned steadily and continuously. Mr. Ambrose Begnaud, a gentleman living within a few yards of the Butte, who is of an inventive and ingenious turn of mind, often considered the possibility of utilizing this gas. A large pipe was let down into the reservoir and run to his house same [sic] fifty or more yards away. To this large pipe small pipes are connected which supply gas to the cooking stove, fireplace and for lighting purposes. The gas has never failed and gives a continuous and steady flow, and has proven to be very convenient and satisfactory.

Mr. Begnaud's experiment had revealed a possible use of the gas at Anse La Butte, which seems to be present in inexhaustible quantities, which may eventually prove very valuable to the town of Lafayette as a source of fuel and for illuminating purposes.--Lafayette Gazette.

**The Crowley Signal*, November 14, 1903.

THE ACADIANS REQUEST A PRIEST*

Translated by Carl A. Brasseaux

Sir,

The Acadians of this command presented me with a request for your excellency [and] an entreaty to provide a salary. They solicit a cure in their section. However inadequate the pretext, the one which they have availed himself of the first signs of illness [to suspend his ministrations]. I demonstrated to them that they did not have the casual sort in the one [priest] named to hold this single position, and [they ask] you not to suppress the character of this nation. (1) I suspect that after this favor, they will request to be administered and governed by a man of their own stamp.

Sir, I have the honor to be, with respect,

Your most humble and obedient servant,
Chevalier DeClouet

Attakapas

February 20, 1788

*Letter, DeClouet to Governor Estevan Miro. Spain. Archivos de Indies, Papeles Procedentes de Cuba, Legajo 200, p. 361.

1. The Acadians obviously did not want a Spanish priest.

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Official Organ of the
Attakapas Historical Association
published in cooperation with the
Center for Louisiana Studies
University of Southwestern Louisiana

Managing Editor: Carl A. Brasseaux
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Consulting Editors: Glenn R. Conrad, Mathe Allain
Circulation Manager: Anna Jane Marks

Dues Schedule:

Life membership for individuals: \$100.00

Annual dues for individuals:

- a. Active or Associate (out-of-state) membership: \$5.00
- b. Contributing membership: \$15.00
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Annual Institutional Dues:

- a. Regular: \$5.00
- b. Sustaining: \$10.00

Canadian dues: Same as American dues, payable in U. S. dollars.

Foreign dues: \$5.00 plus postage.

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Lafayette, Louisiana 70504

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FRIEND OR FOE? RELIGIOUS EXILES AT THE OPELOUSAS POST IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By Glenn R. Conrad

Fort Panmur, the English installation at Natchez, together with the Anglo-American civilian population of the area, fell under Spanish control shortly after Spain declared war on Britain in the summer of 1779. For sometime thereafter, however, the allegiance of the inhabitants of Natchez was cause for Spanish concern. Were these colonists now unqualified subjects of Carlos III? Did some residents secretly sympathize with the American independence movement? How many were covertly loyal to George III? Over the next two years a series of events would provide some answers to these questions.

About six months after the Spanish capture of Natchez (February 26, 1780), Alexandre DeClouet, commandant of the Opelousas and Attakapas posts, reported almost casually to Governor Bernardo de Galvez that two English families, those of Richard and John Ellis (father and son), had abandoned their homes near Natchez and had moved to the Attakapas with about 100 slaves. (1) Galvez responded that he was pleased that the Ellises had chosen to live in the Attakapas, for he knew them to be an upstanding family.

The next incident in a seemingly unrelated series of events occurred within a

few months. On June 24, DeClouet notified the governor that sixty Irish and German refugees from Fort Pitt had arrived at the Opelousas Post and were requesting permission to settle there. They claimed to have fled their homes in Pennsylvania because of English suppression of Catholicism. DeClouet noted that their initial request was to be allowed to baptize their children. While willing to receive the new settlers, the commandant informed the governor that he could provide them very little in the way of food, clothing and shelter. Therefore, he asked Galvez to send emergency supplies as well as orders regarding the disposition of the refugees. (2) In the meantime, DeClouet and other established settlers would care for the newcomers until their fate was determined.

Acting Governor Pedro Piernas (Governor Galvez being away on the Mobile campaign) responded that the Spanish intendant of Louisiana, Martin Navarre, would contact DeClouet concerning the future of the refugees. For unknown reasons, however, Navarre apparently ignored the problem of the immigrants. Indeed, little more is heard from DeClouet on the subject, except an occasional reminder to Piernas that he was

1. Alexandre DeClouet to Bernardo de Galvez, February 26, 1780. Archivo General de Indias, Papeles procedentes de la Isla de Cuba, legajo 193-B:72. Hereafter cited as P.P.C., with folio number.

2. DeClouet to Galvez, June 24, 1780. P.P.C., 193-B:72.

still awaiting Navarre's instructions.

Over the next year, then, one can assume that the English, Irish and German refugees went about the task of establishing themselves in the Opelousas and Attakapas districts, including the newly established community of New Iberia. Even though the new settlers had caused no problems, their presence did, nevertheless, cause DeClouet and others to ponder certain questions. Why had these people suddenly appeared on DeClouet's doorstep? Was religion their real motive for leaving Pennsylvania? Were they British Loyalists deliberately sent into enemy territory to subvert the heretofore successful Spanish war effort on the Gulf Coast? Were they American sympathizers who sought to use Spanish territory as a base of operations against the British in the old Southwest? Their presence must have been a bit disconcerting; still, they gave every indication of being what they claimed to be, religious refugees simply seeking to start life anew. Thus, the new arrivals were largely dismissed from official attention until the spring of 1781.

In early March 1781, Galvez launched his campaign to capture the British naval base at Pensacola. As part of his defensive strategy for that British installation, Colonel John Campbell called upon the Loyalists at Natchez to rise in rebellion against Spanish domination. Through this diversionary tactic, the Englishman hoped, Galvez would abandon the siege of Pensacola and return to the Mississippi to put down the rebellion. Moreover, if the Spaniards withdrew from the Pensacola area, even for a brief period of time, Campbell might be able to receive long overdue reinforcements.

Campbell's plan was only partially successful. The English settlers of the Natchez District did strike against Spanish

control, and, led by John Blommart, they succeeded in recapturing Fort Panmur in late April. Campbell's tactic was unsuccessful, however, for it failed to lure Galvez back to the Mississippi.

Learning of the rebellion at Natchez, Acting Governor Piernas ordered DeClouet and Carlos de Grand Prè, commandant at Pointe Coupée, to assemble their respective militia units to retake Natchez and crush the rebellion. DeClouet was told to supply forty militiamen. This small military force was placed under the command of Etienne-Robert de la Morandière who would join Grand Prè's contingent en route to Natchez. It was at this juncture that Spanish officials apparently remembered the English, Irish and German settlers who had recently arrived in the Opelousas and Attakapas district and about whose politics so little was known. The sudden removal of forty militiamen from the area could give the "foreigners" an opportunity to implement any ulterior motives which they might harbor.

On May 14, therefore, Piernas dispatched a courier to DeClouet. The Acting Governor ordered the commandant to "watch closely the English and Americans in your district." Moreover, Piernas authorized DeClouet to disarm any Englishman or American whom he suspected of perpetrating anti-Spanish activities. (3)

Apparently alarmed by Piernas' words, DeClouet decided to take no chances with his English-speaking neighbors—he would disarm all of them. The next day, May 15, the Attakapas and Opelousas militia moved through the district collecting the arms of the "foreigners." When the collection of these weapons was completed, DeClouet discovered that the district's French and Spanish settlers had only twenty weapons

more than the refugees. (4)

The arms gathered by DeClouet were placed under guard in the home of Donato, and although the English-speaking families complained about their treatment, there were no further incidents connected with their disarmament. La Morandiere

and his militiamen could now leave the district assured that there would be no surprises from their Irish, German and American neighbors.

The list which follows gives the names of the "foreigners" who were to surrender their weapons. (5)

4. DeClouet to Piarnas, June 14, 1781. P.P.C., 194:170.

5. "Etat du Rencensement General des Individus Etrangers lors du Desarmement dans le Partie des Attakapas, Opelousas et Nouvelle Iberia du 15 mai 1781. P.P.C., 194:152.

LIST OF FOREIGNERS IN THE
DISTRICT OF OPELOUSAS AND
ATTAKAPAS AND IN NEW
IBERIA, MAY 15, 1781

Luke Collins, Sr.
Charles Percy
Theophilus Collins
John Collins
William Collins
Luke Collins, Jr.
William Wikoff
Samuel Welle
Cesar Archinard
Richard Ellis
John Ellis
Thomas Murdock
Raphael Bowker
Evan Mill
Gerard Brandon
Robert Collingwood
John Liver
Solomon Bernard
Henry Askeaiter
Phillip Howard
John Tyson
John Vaughan
Jacob Schnell
Moise Cotter
Mark Cotes
Joshua Garret
George Foreman
William Brown

William Hanchey
John Kennedy
John Cotes
Stephen Cotes
Abraham Roberts
Richard Rodney
Amos Fairchild
Michael Hunter
Seth Hanchey
Athanase Martin
Francis Daniel
Jacob Bihm
Garret Harcourt
James Cole
Matthew Nugent, Jr.
Nathaniel Kennison
James Clayton
John Clark
Robert Huxley
Patrick Clark
Frederick Meyer
Isaac Lewis
James Clark
John Bowels
Peter McIntyre
John Ryan
Francis Holst
Nicholas Smith

Samuel Allen
Roger West
Jacob Miller
George Miller
Michael Ryder
John Orrey
Jack Crook
Michael Ryder
Thomas Priestman
Henry Bradley
Edward Tear
Zachery Martin
Edward Murphy
John McDonald
John Green
Edward Caslow?
Francis Little
Phillip Barbus?
Joseph Wyble
Charles Smith
John Fitzpatrick
Joseph Ingrahm
Jacob Herman
James Brown
Anthony Coskain?
Anthony Bennet
Benjamin Roth
Stephen Rhodes

Gabriel Martin
 Matthew Nugent, Sr.
 Edmund Nugent
 Francis Roth
 Joshua Wallace
 Zachen? Roth
 Abraham Odom
 David Odom
 Michael Haufpauir
 Samuel Bell
 William Fairbanks
 Luke Folse
 John Rider
 Matiquis? Hayes
 James Carlin
 George King

John Folse
 Francis Stelly
 Benjamin Malveau
 William Malveau
 Benjamin Anderson
 Benjamin Fitz
 Solomon Anderson
 Joseph Anderson
 James Anderson
 James Yarborough
 Thomas Yarborough
 John Leger (Ledger?)
 Thomas Parr
 Adam Bridges
 Maxwell? Yarborough

NEW IBERIA

Thomas Berwick
 Ephraim Hormelle
 Thomas Beard
 William Bundick
 Joseph Carr
 John Brandon
 John Hair
 William McCulloch
 Ebenazer Crene
 Cameron
 Patrick McCarty
 John Abshire
 Abraham Stuart
 William Dickson

THE EARLY NATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Early National Historical Society will hold an organizational meeting at the convention of the Organization of American Historians in New York in April 1978. The group will meet at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 13, in the New York Room of the New York Statler Hilton Hotel.

The group welcomes historians of any topical area—political, economic, social, intellectual, cultural, diplomatic, demographic, and military—which falls within the general chronological period of 1789 to 1828.

After formally organizing, the group expects to put out a newsletter devoted to recent developments in the early national period of United States history, including book reviews, lists of new articles and dissertations, and notes on works in progress.

Persons desiring further information should contact James H. Broussard, Room 413, 140 North Senate Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

LES COURSES DE CHEVAUX: UN SPORT DE LA CAMPAGNE

Par Sandra Hebert

Dans les dernières cinquante années l'automation a libéré l'homme, même dans les localités plus rurales, de sa dépendance sur le cheval. Mais le rite de la compétition qui va avec les courses de chevaux continue à exister avec les mêmes fioritures qu'il y a un demi-siècle. Quoique le cheval n'est plus absolument nécessaire pour le travail, il est resté l'objet d'un intérêt profond dans ces batailles simulées de la concurrence equestre. Les chevaux, comme on le sait, sont les symboles masculins par excellence. Il paraît qu'une identification psychologique entre un homme et son cheval se démontre par les passions, les penchants et les aversions d'un cavalier pour sa monture. (1)

La compétition entre les animaux entraîne plus profondément le moi des hommes. Un homme dresse son cheval soigneusement et quand le cheval perd la course, l'homme perd aussi. Un montre cet égotisme en disant:

I tell you what; I cry like a baby when my horse runs. I get such a kick out of it, such a thrill. I don't buy horses; I raise 'em. I know what I raise. I pick 'em up when they're babies from off the ground. You raise 'em 'til when they two or three years old; you take 'em and make 'em perform and if they win, it just goes right through you. It's the biggest thrill you ever get

in life. It's like your own child. I imagine it's the closest thing you have to a child. (E. R.)

On pourrait dire que les soins prodigués à un cheval, qui deviennent parfois de véritables rituels expriment un certain narcissisme. La préparation d'un cheval pour les courses prend beaucoup de temps. Quand le cheval a bonne apparence et s'acquitte bien il fait honneur aux soins de son maître. A. S., qui a élevé et dressé des chevaux pour les courses de chevaux de harnais pendant les années quarante décrit ce rituel en disant:

Well, you'd have to train a horse about seven or ten miles a day--jog him and speed him about three times a week. And when you got through on the track, you come into the barn. You have to cool him out. First you give him a bath. Next thing, you rub him down. Next thing, you embrace the muscles of his legs to keep him from gettin' sore. And that would take you about an hour--to give him a bath and start coolin' him off. You didn't want to leave a wet thread on him. That's the way it had to be.

Quand le cheval perd, son maître perd

1. See Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play," *Doodalos: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (Winter, 1972), 4-7.

aussi. U. F. en décrivant ses sensations dit:

You feel bad when you lose.
You feel all discouraged. You feel
down. You feel that your horse let
you down and you get
discouraged. It hurts, I mean you
got to. It's a funny game.
Sometimes I wish I'd never got
into it, and still I like it.

Pour empêcher leurs propres pertes
quelquefois les hommes ignoraient
politesse et lois. Souvent quand un
homme se trompée par un autre, il
oubliait tout principe de morale. E. R.
raconte un histoire qui fait preuve de ce
genre de conduite.

There was a man by the name of
Z. R., and matched a race with G.
N.--he's still livin'. He matched a
race maybe that's been about ten
years ago. He matched a race for
maybe \$200. G. N. knew that his
horse could not run Z. R.'s horse,
but he matched him just so he
would get a chance to poison old
man Z. R.'s horse. Mr. Z. R. was a
man what had a lota money.
There was a place in Crowley
called Hector's, [where] he
trotted. It was a damn cheap
place. And this old man would
come up there about every night
and drink, get a few drinks and
play around with the girls, and
they knew that. So, they matched
this race and the Saturday night
before the race, old D. B.--he's
dead--R. B. and P. B.--he's dead
too--(they was race people), well
they met Mr. Z. R. at Hector's and
they went to bet him that he
wouldn't win the next day. But
they had one of the brothers [who]
was in Z. R.'s stable poisoning the

horse and Mr. Z. R. was drinking.
They bet him something like
\$5,000. He didn't have that kind
[of] money, but he made checks,
and Mr. A.--that Dago in there--
would O.K. the check. It was
good. And the other boys they
betted him all the money. The one
that's not there don't win. And
this is the truth. So when Z. R.
sobered up and went home to feed
his horse, his horse was dead in
the stable.

Ce sport hippique campagnard a
toujours offert et offre encore beaucoup
de contrastes. On y découvre
simultanément le bien et le mal, la
chevalerie et le crime, les plaisirs et la
misère.

Quel type d'homme voit-on aux courses
de chevaux. W. F. décrit la foule en
disant:

A bunch...like us who planted
cotton, corn and potatoes--wearing
a white shirt and blue overalls
with the suspenders. Barefoot,
chewing Bull Durham or Black
Diamond.

A l'époque où les courses de chevaux
étaient un divertissement très populaires,
(2) les hommes, les femmes, et les enfants
y allaient le dimanche après-midi. R. S. se
rappelle que les gens y allaient en auto
(quand ils en avaient une), en voiture, a
cheval, ou a pied. Les femmes y allaient
surtout pour s'amuser et pour rencontrer
leurs amis. On y vendait des gâteaux, des
bonbons, et des boissons. A. S. décrit
cette ambiance:

A lota' times they'd make a little
poker game on the side, ya' know,
in the stable or something. But

the people who went there, they went to see those horses run.

Au Point Noir, en la paroisse Acadia, toutefois, cette ambiance était moins innocente:

In that part of the country where I was living, people were still pretty wild. Now I've seen where it got so hot, they'd even open their knives, and they'd get each other, and they'd have to have the law. Now I've never seen 'em get into it with the knives, but I've seen 'em open 'em. They tell me before—that was before my time—that was when the races was going on, they'd go to them races and the trouble would start. Two mens would open their knives; they'd take a hankachif. They'd tie it on each one's wrist, and they'd turn 'em loose with each a knife in their hands and let 'em work it out. It was really rough. They'd drink. You see every track had some beer to sell and some liquor. Everyone would get drunk and then later in the afternoon it would get, the rougher it would get. I went three or four times at the track—at Evangeline Downs—but I never did like it as [much as] a small track because it's never excited out there. (U. F.)

Dans les localités du sud-ouest de la Louisiane la réglementation des courses s'est développée différent. Cette réglementation était influencés aussi bien par le genre de courses (courses de chevaux de selle ou courses de chevaux de harnais) que par la façon dont ces localités étaient équipées. W. F., jockey quand il avait neuf ans, se rappelle les courses faites sur les chemins droits et non

macadamisés. Quelquefois des hommes s'y rencontraient et ils "enmarraient une course." (3) (P. H.) C'est à dire, ils s'accordaient sur les conditions d'une course de chevaux. Ensuite l'un d'eux mesurait la distance de la course en arpents. (4) Très souvent la course était spontanée. Les hommes déterraient les chevaux de leurs voitures, pour aller faire la course. La course pouvait rapporter soixante-quinze sous, au plus. Quant au jockey il ne gagnait que cinq ou dix sous la course.

La piste était un des facteurs les moins importants pour les courses petits parours (par contraste avec les courses de distance). Un chemin ou une prairie assez droite suffisait. Mais un piste dans un tel endroit souvent posait des problèmes comme C. P. raconte dans l'histoire suivante:

Good Advice was about the best horse they had here. And Mr. B. P., he was from New Iberia, he ordered a horse, got a horse from around Tennessee or somewhere. And he got that horse to beat Good [Advice]. And he brought him down here; they raced him Sunday. And they was comin' around the track and a cow went across the track and hit that horse right on the blade of the shoulder. That was it.

D'ordinaire les juges des courses de chevaux étaient choisis parmi la foule. C'étaient des hommes honêtes et so-disant des experts en la matière. (R. S.)

Parce qu'il n'y avait jamais de règles écrites pour les courses de campagne, on pouvait établir spéciales et écrire ces conditions avant d'enmarer un course. Par exemple, on pouvait préciser l'heure de la course, montant de la bourse et décider s'il était nécessaire d'avoir des

3. Enmarer est un terme ecadienne qui est probablement un corruption du mot amarrer et employe comme le mot lier.

4. See Lauren C. Post, *Cojun Sketches: From the Proiries of Southwest Louisiano* (Baton Rouge, 1962), p. 128.

voies séparées ou non, etc. Si on ne précisait pas ces conditions à l'avance, tout était permis. (F. B.)

Tout les gens qui allaient aux courses de chevaux prenaient au sérieux le jeu, et les paris. Quand la bourse montait, la tension des participants montait aussi. (F. I.) Le propriétaire du cheval était le plus engagé. Si son cheval ne gagnait pas, c'était l'homme qui chagrinait ses amis et ses parieurs.

Il était d'usage de ne jamais faire crédit aux courses. Si le parieur perdait un gageure, il devait payer ses dettes tout de suite. C'était une règle à laquelle tout le monde obéissait. (R. S.)

Ainsi, le grand désir de gagner avait pour conséquence la fabrication de mauvaises intrigues souvent très compliquées. S. B. raconte l'histoire d'un jockey qui a employé son fouet sans succès contre un adversaire qui le trompait:

He was Doc' Horn runnin a horse from next to New Iberia. He got next to the other horse and caught hold of the bridle and held on. The other jockey whipped to get his horse loose, but he never turned loose. His hands was all swollen. He finished the race and he won. He jumped off the horse and run jumped into the trunk of a car. It was all rigged up before the race.

Quelque fois le jockey lui-même retenait son cheval. R. S. raconte un tel cas en disant:

I know this old Richard, I used to follow him. He would tell me when to bet and when not to bet. He had good horses. He'd say, 'Well today don't bet on him; he's gonna lose.' He'd make him lose. He'd make him lose, but you see that was to catch a fish next time. So he'd come there sometimes

with his horse all full of cockle burrs-like an old plow horse. But he'd never let 'em beat him more than a foot, a foot or two.

Aussi les parieurs perdaient confiance en ce cheval et ensuite pariaient contre lui. Si le cheval gagnait une seconde fois, comme il était fort probable, le propriétaire gagnait une bourse dont le montant était d'autant plus grand.

But like I said, mighty good horses, but they'd come up there and they wouldn't show at all--full of cockle burrs. That was to outwit the other fellas. (R. S.)

Chaque homme avait sa propre façon de soigner son cheval. La plupart des gens nourrissaient leurs chevaux avec de l'avoine et du foin. S'ils donnaient du maïs aux chevaux avant les courses, les chevaux se fatiguaient facilement. Si on voulait jouer un tour à son adversaire on donnait la veille du maïs au cheval de ce dernier.

Chaque jour J. H. donnait deux jaunes d'oeufs battus avec du sucre à ses meilleurs chevaux. Il le leur donnait pour augmenter leur endurance.

Croyant que les chevaux avaient besoin d'un stimulant pendant la course, certains leur donnaient de l'alcool pur ou du whisky. A. S. qui parle d'un pareil incident dit:

Sometimes they'd give 'em enough whiskey to knock 'em out. I saw E. R. over there one day give him--he lost the race by it--but he gave his little horse too much and he just lay down and got drunk. That's all there was to it--they made him get that horse back on the track after he got up to where he could walk around, and he lost the race. He lost his money too.

On soignait les chevaux aussi bien selon

l'art vétérinaire que populaire. Comme R. S. dit, "Everybody had a way to mind his horse. I've seen men try to do 'em good and kill 'em." Comme n'y avait pas beaucoup de vétérinaires, les remèdes a la maison jouissaient d'un très grande popularité. C. P. remarque:

It was a very common thing in those days. They'd give 'em a little soda and vinegar, so say it was for gas. I know that black tobacco and bee wax--you give 'em that--that's faster than any heart worm medicine they got. Only thing, you got to hold 'em for about fifteen minutes 'cause if you turn 'em loose they're gonna fall. They turn just like velvet all over. You boil that tobacco, tie it up in a cloth, and you put that bee wax in there and let it melt, and make 'em drink that. With diseases, they'd treat 'em and sometimes they'd hit and sometimes not. In those days it was very seldom they'd save a case of bots.

Un remède courant pour la maladie du jeune âge était du vinaigre mélangé avec du poivre. On le mettait dans le nex d'un cheval pour le faire tousser. (E. R.)

Quand un cheval était nerveux, on lui mettait une chèvre dans l'écurie. C'est un remède bien connu même aujourd'hui. (F. B.)

On croyait aussi que l'huile d'un alligator ou l'huile d'un crocodile avait le pouvoir de repousser celui qui venait en contact avec celui-ci. Quand un homme mettait cette huile sur son cheval, il empêchait un autre cheval de le passer. (5) U. F. raconte l'histoire suivante:

They'd say that crackodile oil--you take the grease off a crackodile and melt it and rub it on the horse and another horse

wouldn't go near him. So they say when he was runnin' he'd stay in the back. I remember one time they even accused me, but I didn't know anything about that.

Pour avoir de la chance, certains jockeys portaient les mêmes vêtements qu'ils avaient porté autrefois lorsqu'ils avaient gagné une course. (6) Parfois les jockeys apportaient une patte d'un lapin. (7) D'autres visitaient des cartomanciennes pour se faire prédire leurs chance. T. D. dit:

They had an old colored woman, Mallet, who used to, as you say, draw cards. Beleaux--that lives close to Sole--they had one horse that was supposed to run on the Sunday, and they went and see that old colored woman, and she asked him to bring her the deck of cards. She said, "Y'all can bet all your money on that horse; it's gonna win absolutely sure." And it did happen that the horse lost. They liked to killed that old lady.

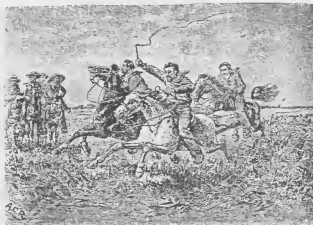
La légende de Gabriel (Gab) Straut (ou Lestrappes) a donné lieu à la croyance aux pouvoirs surnaturels. Gab, un petit mulâtre, était bien connu dans le monde des courses de chevaux. Il venait des environs de Carencro et il avait trois fils. Il avait été autrefois dresseur et jockey. (J. H.) On peut encore entendre des descriptions de Gab telles que:

Gab, I met him and people thought that he was some kind of a god or something. You know, they believed in him, and they thought that he had control of a horse's brain, and he could tell ya' if that horse was gonna win the day of a race, and he could make that horse

5. See Hand. ed., Brown Collection, no. 997.

6. Ibid., no. 3631.

7. Ibid., nos. 5791-5797.



Acadian Horse Race, ca. 1880

lose by his control. He was a very, very good trainer, but he believed too much in that. They shot him. He made a race, and he won the race. They had a very big amount of money bet, and that night he was eating supper, and they shot him at the table. (U. F.)

He was a man who knew a lot about horses. He was a pretty good trainer, a pretty good jockey. That man could read a mind of a horse before he even started anything with it. He didn't like anybody 'round his horses when he braked 'em. (S. B.)

He was a catch when I knew

him—a jockey. Often times I'd hear him say himself, 'Well,' he'd say, 'it ain't the horse runnin', it's me; I'm gonna run it.' And the horse would beat that race too. But how he did it, I don't know. (C. P.)

Bien que les histoires concernant sa mort soient variées, tout le monde était d'accord sur le fait qu'il était d'une manière violente.

Les courses de chevaux campagnardes constituent un sport très vivant même aujourd'hui. Comme tout les sports, il offre un divertissement aux gens qui recherchent le plaisir.

LES INFORMATEURS

SB--Negro; has worked with horses all his life; presently makes a living by shoeing horses; in his late 30s or early 40s.

CB and FB--white; in their 30s; follow country races at Carencro Raceway; employed by Evangeline Downs; own horses and race them on country tracks.

TD--60 years old; carpenter; white; resident of Church Point, Louisiana.

WF--52 years old; white; employed by Central Industries; resident of Bristol, Louisiana; between ages of 9 and 17 was jockey at country races at Prairie Ronde; Catholic; of French-Acadian descent.

UF--41 years old; white; of French-Acadian descent; Catholic; resident of Church Point, Louisiana; although crippled, still raises horses for country racing; automobile salesman.

JH--now deceased, but at time of interview was 85 years old; Catholic; white; of French-Acadian descent; retired farmer; raised horses for country racing; sometimes called in to judge the races; resident of Duson, Louisiana; educated by tutors.

PH--57 years old; Catholic; white; of Spanish-French descent; school bus driver; resident of Sunset, Louisiana; elementary school education.

FI--48 years old; white; Catholic; of German-French descent; M.A. from L.S.U.; high school teacher; resident of Sunset, La.; drove in harness during the late 1940's.

CP--age 78; Negro; Catholic; Negro-Indian ancestry; retired farmer; worked as a swiper; presently grooms and cares for horses at the Donald S. Gardner Quarter Horse Ranch, Cankton, Louisiana.

ER--age 64; white; Catholic; of Spanish-French descent; owned and operated the 'Ti' Maurice Racetrack, Bosco, Louisiana; presently employed by the Evangeline Motel, Lafayette, Louisiana.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
John	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Agnes	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Barth, Louis	34		Carpenter	Germany	Germany	Germany
Blandon, C.	34		Housekpr.	Texas	Mexico	Mexico
Alexandre	57	Husband	Icemaker	At Sea	France	France
Orillion, G. H.	45		Carpenter	La.	La.	La.
Mary S.	48	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Canada	Canada
Orillion, A.	21	Son	Works at Foundry	La.	La.	La.
Orillion, L.	17	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Orillion, S.	11	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Orillion, M.	9	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Orillion, C.	5	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Orillion, H.	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Stansbury, Lowry ?	25		Gardner	Va.	Va.	Va.
Sorrell, Icene ?	25		Swamper	Texas	Tenn.	Tenn.
Mary	24	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Ky.	La.
Eugene	11m	Son		La.	Texas	La.
Louis, Martha	46		Seamstress	Ga.	Ark.	S. C.
Callahan, Elora	24	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	Ireland	Ga.
Callahan, J. W.	27	Husband of above	Painter	N. Y.	N. Y.	N. Y.
Elva	4	Daughter		La.	N. Y.	La.
Eugene	2	Son		La.	N. Y.	La.
(Infant)	?	Daughter		La.	N. Y.	La.
Moss, Thomas	36		Steamboat Capt.	La.	N. Y.	Nova Scotia
Emma	30	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Tenn.	Ala.
Carrie	7	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Thomas	5	Son		La.	La.	La.
Charles E.	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Burnette, Mary	64		Housekpr.	Ky.	Va.	S. C.
Samuel M.	34	Son	Druggist	La.	N. J.	Ky.
Elmira	29	Daughter		La.	N. J.	Ky.

Housenolder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Rand, Samantha	62		Teacher	Mass.	Mass.	Mass.
Mattie	21	Daughter	Seamstress	La.	Mass.	Mass.
Kate	21	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	Mass.	Mass.
McCracken, John	20	Boarder	Works at Oil Mill	La.	Ohio	Fla.
Sontag, George	40	Boarder	Music Tech.	France	France	France
Barba, Slcide	25	Boarder	At School	La.	La.	La.
Pirita, Gustqve	47		Grocer	La.	Havana	La.
Beel, Elizabeth	43		Housekpr.	La.	Md.	La.
Elmira	14	Daughter		La.	La.	Ky.
John	10	Son		La.	La.	Ky.
Laurah	8	Daughter		La.	La.	Ky.
Marion B.	6	Son		La.	La.	Ky.
Boudreaux, Joe	54		Huckster	Ill.	Ill.	La.
Corine	48	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Charles	19	Son		La.	Ill.	La.
Stephens, John	49		Works at Mill	Switz.	Switz.	Switz.
Elizabeth	33	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
John P.	12	Son	At School	La.	Switz.	France
Daniel	1	Son		La.	Switz.	France
Cantine, Willham	45		Agent for Wind Mill	Michigan	?	?
Parmela	30	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Frank	12	Son	At School	La.	Mich.	La.
Tregre, Istell	50	Mother-in-law	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Fanguis, H.	19	Cousin	Moss Agent	La.	La.	La.
St. Peter Street						
Nezal, Madeline	59		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Moor, Julie	51	Daughter (Paralyzsd)	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Moor, Mary	33	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Moor, August	19	Son	Driving Stag	La.	France	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Raggasson, A.	23		Carriage Trimmer	La.	La.	La.
Saintes, John	42		Gardner	France	France	France
Josephine	31	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Mary	13	Daughter	At School	La.	France	La.
Bernard	8	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
White, Minnie	34		School Tech.	Miss.	S. C.	S. C.
Mary	11	Daughter		Mo.	Ala.	Miss.
Lilly	9	Daughter		La.	Ala.	Miss.
Cain, Martha	35		Housekpr.	England	England	England
Daniel	38	Husband	Salt miner	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland
Stine, Edward	35		Carpenter	La.	La.	La.
Julie	11	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
William	9	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Rosa	7	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Jasper	6	Son		La.	La.	La.
Albert	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Reynolds, Martha	64	Mother-in-law		La.	Penn.	La.
Veartor (Viator?) Andrew	65		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Carnalite	60	Wife	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Meaques, Anital	24		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Agamer	18	Wife	Baker	La.	La.	La.
Narquine (Naivin?), Cleophas	45		Cook	La.	La.	La.
Eugenie	44	Wife	Bricklayer	La.	La.	La.
Laughlin, Henry	25	Son-in-law	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Alice	21	Daughter	Blacksmith	La.	Ky.	La.
Dalsy	1m	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Landry, Aley	77	Father-in-law		La.	La.	France
Landry, Rosa	75	Mother-in-law		La.	La.	La.
Landry, Edgar	4	Nephew		La.	La.	La.
Mackey, John J.	41		Lumberman	Ohio	Ohio	Ohio
Mary	31	Wife	Housekpr.	Texas	Ga.	Tenn.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Hale, Stephen	14	Stepson	Engineer	Texas	Mo.	Texas
Hale, Suzzie	12	Stepdaughter		La.	Mo.	Texas
Bennie	7	Son		La.	Ohio	Texas
James	4	Son		La.	Ohio	Texas
John	1	Son		La.	Ohio	Texas
Doliso, Joseph	47		Butcher	France	France	France
Romaine	38		Housekpr.	France	France	France
Lucy	17	Daughter		La.	France	France
Emily	14	Daughter		La.	France	France
Marcel	12	Son	At School	La.	France	France
Alexon	10	Son	At School	La.	France	France
Mary	7	Daughter		La.	France	France
Joseph	6	Son		La.	France	France
Blanchet, Jule	37		Keeps Warehouse	La.	La.	La.
Henrietta	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Caroline	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Rita	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Louise	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Joseph	2m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Hebert, Alex	50	Father(wife's)	Has Rheumatism	La.	La.	La.
Hebert, Henry	26	Son (of above)	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Felicity, Sister	64		Teacher	France	France	France
Stanislas, Sister	31		Teacher	La.	Germany	Germany
Jacquet, C.	46		Clergyman	France	France	France
Dupre, Oscar	46		Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Zulme	33	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Alice	13	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Ben?	11	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Cecelia	9	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Homer	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Edmond	40	Brother	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Dupuy, H. J.	33		Grocer	La.	La.	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's		Father's		Mother's	
				place of Birth	place of Birth	Birth	Birth	place of Birth	place of Birth
Mary	30	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Homer	9	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Jules	7	Son		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Willie	5	Son		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Trinidad, M. C.	65	Mother	At Home	La.	La.	France	France	La.	La.
Veasy, Mrs. Alfred	34		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Legia	11	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Aronette	9	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Carniclle	7	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Orelion, J. D.	33		Carpenter	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Joseph	6	Son		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Charlotte	4	Daughter		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Mary	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Migues, Louis	68	Father (Wife's)		La.	La.	Spain	Spain	Spain	Spain
Mary	54	Wife (of above)	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Louis	21	Son	Job Worker	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Philicia	16	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Fourmiquie, Marte	26	Daughter	Governess	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Pickett, John	65		Grocer	Va.	Va.	England	England	Va.	Va.
Louisa	64	Wife	Housekpr.	Va.	Va.	-	-	-	-
Sarah	43	Daughter		La.	La.	Va.	Va.	Va.	Va.
John	44	Son	Carpenter	La.	La.	Va.	Va.	Va.	Va.
Antoinette	26	Wife (of above)	Housekpr.	La.	La.	France	France	La.	La.
Louis	10	Son (of above)	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Benjamin	6	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Mary	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Escubas, Elizabeth	53		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Branigan, Jim	35		Laborer	Md.	Md.	Md.	Md.	Md.	Md.
Josephine	35		Washing	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Boudreaux, Daniel	50		Engineer	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Dolphina	34	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Julia	18	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Joseph Theodore	14	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Rigena Herbert, Dale	9	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Daunay, Anthony	7	Cousin	Seamstress Works at Brickyard	La.	La.	La.
Clara	32	Sister		La.	La.	La.
Emma	22	Sister		La.	La.	La.
Virginia	12	Sister	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Rosa	12	Sister	Seamstress	La.	La.	La.
Soulter, Emile	18	Mother	Seamstress	La.	La.	La.
Marian	40	Wife	Hardware Merchant	France	France	France
Camille	52	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Bertha	40	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Alfred	6	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Emanuel	4	Son		La.	France	La.
Henderson, H. C.	3	Son		La.	France	La.
R. M.	1	Son		Ark.	Ala.	Ala.
Emma	34	Wife	Carpenter	Ky.	Ky.	Ohio
Dora	25	Daughter	Housekpr.	Ill.	Ark.	Ky.
Crouse, Marie	5	Daughter		Ill.	Ark.	Ky.
Paul	4	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Adonis	28	Son		La.	La.	La.
Gilmore, J. Y.	8	Son		La.	La.	La.
Maggie	8m		Editor	Penn.	Penn.	Penn.
Victor	42	Wife	Housekpr.	Va.	Va.	Va.
Mary	43	Son	At School	Ala.	Penn.	Va.
John	17	Daughter	At School	La.	Penn.	Va.
Abner	10	Son		La.	Penn.	Va.
Blanks, F. A.	4	Son		La.	Penn.	Va.
Blanks, Charles	2	Son	Boarder	La.	Penn.	Va.
Saxon, Lillian	25	Boarder	Printer	Canada	Canada	Canada
Burtah, S. S.	28	Husband (of above)		Va.	Va.	Va.
	5	Daughter (of above)		La.	La.	Canada
	42		Making Pumps	Canada	N.Y.	Canada

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Artigue, Louis	38		Carpenter	France	France	France
Leontine	28	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	France
Pierre	8	Son		La.	France	La.
Leon	6	Son		La.	France	La.
Louis	2	Son		La.	France	La.
Fourcade, August	26		Grocer	France	France	France
Marie	24	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	France
Alice	5	Daughter		La.	France	La.
Felix	3	Son		La.	France	La.
Campbell, Sophie	56		Private Boarding	La.	Va.	La.
Beverly	26	Son	Grocer	La.	Penn.	La.
Lee, Althia	40	Sister		La.	Va.	La.
Senac, Catherine	38		Seamstress	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland
John	10	Son	Driving Hack	La.	France	Ireland
Roman	6	Son		La.	France	Ireland
Mary	1	Daughter		La.	France	Ireland
Burke, P. E.	43		Steamboat Captain	La.	Ireland	Ireland
Henrietta	17	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
A. H.	19	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Paul	15	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Sanrah?	10	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Gudrot?, Eucharia	32	Sister-in-law	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Renoudet, A.	28		Clerk on Steamboat	La.	France	La.
S. M.	26	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
A. V.	50	Mother		La.	La.	La.
Staffort, Frank B.	46		Drayman	La.	La.	La.
Minerva	28	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Louisa	8	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Mary	8	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Martha	6	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Charlie	4	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Henry	1	Son		La.	La.	La.
Louis D.	20	Son	Works for Blacksmith	La.	La.	La.
Benjamin	16	Son	Driving Dray	La.	La.	La.
John P.	15	Son	Works at Telegraph	La.	La.	La.
Goldberg, Samuel	25		Huckster	Russia	Russia	Russia
Malain, F. C.	52		Grocer	La.	France	At Sea
Lutitia	29	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
George	10	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Louis	7	Son		La.	La.	La.
Albert	5	Son		La.	La.	La.
Julie	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Montagne, Elie	74		Gen. Mer.	France	France	France
Artimize	66	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
DeBlanc, Wilfred	19	Grandson	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Montagne, Charlie	22	Grandson	Blacksmith	La.	La.	La.
Lizzie	18	Wife	At Home	La.	La.	La.
_____, Frank	3m	Son (of Charlie)		La.	La.	La.
Myres, P.	60		Dry Goods Merchant	Alsace	Alsace	Alsace
Cecile	38	Wife	Housekpr.	Alsace	Alsace	Alsace
Marcus, Augusta	28		Seamstress	Germany	Germany	Germany
Clara	6	Daughter		Texas	Germany	Germany
Lufkey, Bertha	13	Sister	At Home	Germany	Germany	Germany
Railroad Avenue						
Rhodraig, Rosa	30		Housekpr.	La.	Miss.	La.
John	30	Husband	Clerk Barroom	France	France	France
Adolph	7	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
Leona	4	Daughter		La.	France	France
André	2	Son		La.	France	France
Dore, Adrien	47		Printer	La.	La.	La.
Mary	42	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
						55

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Paul	14	Son	Printer	La.	La.	La.
Luc	12	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Whitnay	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Lucy	13	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Lelia	7m	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Arnandez, Belizer	50		Brick maker	La.	La.	La.
Elizabeth	35	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Italy	La.
Eves	15	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Julie	11	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Clay, Alfred E.	27		Clergyman	England	England	England
Cornelia	18	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Danclos, Cornelia	29		Seamstress	La.	France	La.
Gabrial	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Robert	3m	Son		La.	La.	La.
DeValcourt, Sarah	61		Housekpr.	N.J.	N.J.	N.J.
John	34	Son	Clerk	La.	Md.	N.J.
Lizzie	32	Daughter		La.	Md.	N.J.
C. Dayton	27	Son		La.	Md.	N.J.
Sarah	20	Daughter		La.	Md.	N.J.
Banard, A. G.	26		Prop. Oil Tank	La.	Mass.	N.Y.
Nina	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Shadel, H. H.	28		Swamper	Md.	-	-
Annie	25	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Tenn.	La.
Williams, Alberta	13	Sister (of Annie)	At School	Texas	Tenn.	La.
Boas, A. C.	43		Machinist	Germany	-	-
Evilina	35	Wife	Housekpr.	Miss.	Europe	Europe
Eddie	11	Son	At School	La.	Germany	Miss.
Mary	7	Daughter	At School	La.	Germany	Miss.
Willie	4	Son		La.	Germany	Miss.
Walter	6m	Son		La.	Germany	Miss.
Emmer, William	64		Retired Baker	Germany	Germany	Germany
Mary	54	Wife	Housekpr.	Germany	Germany	Germany

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Clara	17	Daughter	At Home	La.	Germany	Germany
Magdelaine	13	Daughter	At Home	La.	Germany	Germany
Hayes, H. T.	44		Housekpr.	Miss.	Tenn.	Tenn.
Lucy	21	Daughter	At Home	Miss.	Tenn.	Miss.
Kate	19	Daughter	At Home	Miss.	Tenn.	Miss.
Manerva	15	Daughter	At Home	Miss.	Tenn.	Miss.
Cage, L. T.	69	Grandmother	At Home	Tenn.	Tenn.	Tenn.
Veasey, Ardelle	67		Seamstress	La.	Spain	Spain
Agenoria	30	Daughter	Seamstress	La.	La.	La.
Gonzallia, Sidney	7	Grandson	At School	La.	La.	La.
Hebert, F. J.	35		Clerk	La.	La.	La.
M. V.	24	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Courage, Seymour	50		Barkeeper	France	France	France
Margaret	50	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
John	26	Son	Butcher	La.	France	France
Battran	24	Son	Peddler	La.	France	France
John Marie	16	Son	Clerk, Barroom	La.	France	France
Jennie	18	Daughter	At School	France	France	France
Alex	9	Son	At School	La.	France	France
Cenal, Therese	17		Wash & Iron	France	France	France
Weeks, Charles	48		Capitalist	La.	Miss.	Va.
Margaret	46	Wife	Housekpr	Va.	Va.	Va.
Dora	19	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	Va.
Harriet	17	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	Va.
William	15	Son	At School	La.	La.	Va.
Edward P	14	Son	At School	La.	La.	Va.
Mary B.	9	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	Va.
Crouchet, John (sic)	48		Seamstress (?)	La.	Ohio	La.
Bertha	19	Daughter	Seamstress	La.	France	La.
John	17	Son	Clerk in Barroom	La.	France	La.
William	15	Son	Job Work	La.	France	La.
Michael	12	Son	At School	La.	France	La.

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Annie	10	Daughter	At School	La.	France	La.
Trainer, O. J.	50		Prop. Sash & Blind	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland
Emily	40	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Germany	Germany
James	20	Son	Works at Plain	La.	Ireland	Germany
Luke	18	Son	Works at Plain	La.	Ireland	Germany
Kate	13	Daughter	At School	La.	Ireland	Germany
Mary	11	Daughter	At School	La.	Ireland	Germany
Barney, Josephine	24	Boarder	Seamstress	La.	Ohio	Ohio
Vedrine, Rosa	53		Boarding House	La.	La.	La.
Jimmie	22	Son	R. R. Agt.	La.	France	La.
Louis	20	Son	Clerk	La.	France	La.
Caronille?	18	Daughter	At Home	La.	France	La.
Waggoner, Elizabeth	54		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Lenora	28	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
George	19	Son	Carpenter	La.	La.	La.
John	17	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Willie	15	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Taylor, Mary?	27	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
—, Marnie	8	Daughter (of Mary)		La.	Ala.	La.
—, Rubie	6	Son (Sic) (of Mary)		La.	Ala.	La.
—, Jimmie	4	Son (of Mary)		La.	Ala.	La.
—, Alexander	3	Son (of Mary)		La.	Ala.	La.
—, George	1	Son (of Mary)		La.	Ala.	La.
Blind, Washington	30		Farmer	N. Y.	N. Y.	N. Y.
Coleman, P. T.	50		Carpenter	Md.	Md.	Md.
Lydia	32	Wife (of Coleman)	Housekpr.	La.	Mo.	La.
Walter	10	Son	At School	La.	Md.	La.
Lizzie	6	Daughter		La.	Md.	La.
Clarence	4	Son		La.	Md.	La.
Alice	1	Daughter		La.	Md.	La.
Hare (Hase?), Sebastien	40		Lawyer	La.	Germany	La.

EARLY ACADIANA THROUGH ANGLO-AMERICAN EYES

By Timothy F. Reilly

Part II

The sharpest criticism of nineteenth-century Acadian culture was often penned by authors least acquainted with their topic.

There were, of course, exceptions to this generalization on the visiting literati, but it is nonetheless valid. Much of the Northern observers' prejudice sprang from the South's intimate association with the accursed institution of slavery, a prolonged and bloody civil war, agrarian poverty, and educational backwardness. All Southerners—not just Acadians—were sometimes perceived as debased and tainted by their uncomfortably humid climate, their loathsome swamps, whose "miasma" spread deadly disease, and the social burden of a large black population, whether enslaved or freed. In a word, the South exemplified the American spirit demoralized, both before and after the War Between the States. While the North and West epitomized the country's pursuit of industrial growth and frontier expansion, the South was a picture of America somehow gone wrong.

Different regions of the South became classic illustrations of social backwardness and institutional lethargy. Acadiana, it should be remembered, was one such favorite example. Other examples included Appalachia and the Interior Highlands (the Ozark Mountain region). Age-old

aspersions against the Anglo-Saxon "hillbilly" in American culture have even had a broader dissemination than those against the Cajun. The "poor white trash" of the southern lowlands from Virginia to Texas, and from North Florida to the Missouri boot heel, likewise endured their peculiar onus in society. Moreover, to have been Southern, black, and poverty-stricken engendered as much contempt as sympathy in nineteenth-century America.

No quarter of Southern culture managed to escape the negative evaluator. Labels such as "Southern aristocrat," "Bourbonism," "Old South," "New South," "Lost Cause," and the "rising Southern bourgeoisie" produced suspicion and revulsion throughout the North, Midwest and West as frequently as they invoked a sentimental longing or respect. Outside the South, collective opinion of this section of the country always seemed more varied and ambivalent than it was toward other sections.

The South unfortunately had not found a meaningful national role to play following the demise of her slave economy. The Northeast, with its cities, factories and confidently aggressive population, was preparing the country for its manifest destiny among the advanced nations of the earth. The Midwest was becoming

synonymous with such code expressions as "breadbasket," "nation's heartland," "nativism," and "bastion of American virtues." The emerging West captured the imagination of the civilized world with its developing frontier, unique folklore, rich metallic ores, and superb natural setting. American optimism and concomitant opportunism were frequently deflected away from the Southern borderlands. Until the middle of the twentieth century, as a matter of fact, the subordinate South played its casual part as a slumbering agrarian backwater; as a supplier of raw cotton, cured tobacco, and cheap lumber; as a warden of inexpensive white and Negro labor; as a repository for a half-forgotten history, and as a staging ground for what some might call a questionable Redemption. In this light, most Southern communities were fair game, microcosms of cultural defect and alienism which inspired the Victorian prose writer to reach new heights in literary self-congratulation and lesson-giving.

Among the foremost ranks of these Victorian authors was A. R. Waud. Waud, author of the most harmful portrayal of the Acadian country folk, traveled to Louisiana shortly after the Civil War and contributed several sketches and subtitled information to *Harper's Weekly*. This pictorial magazine was carefully read by hundreds of thousands of middle-class Americans. Waud reinforced a number of injurious stereotypes and honed them with a thoroughness which has perhaps been unequalled. Considering the magazine's extensive popularity in the 1860s, his words and images of Acadian life have doubtlessly been passed down from one generation to the next:

These primitive people are the descendants of Canadian French settlers in Louisiana; and by dint of intermarriage [i. e. inbreeding] they have succeeded in getting pretty

well down in the social scale.

Without energy, education, or ambition, they are good representatives of the white trash, behind the age in every thing. The majority of all the white inhabitants of these parishes are tolerably ignorant, but these are grossly so--so little are they thought of--that the niggers, when they want to express contempt for one of their own race, call him an Acadian nigger. Their views of the future life are principally confined to the prospect of meeting Monsieur VULSIN, a prominent man among them, who departed this life a good while ago. Some of them are devout Catholics, to which Church they are all attached.

To live without effort is their apparent aim in life, and they are satisfied with very little, and are, as a class, quite poor. Their language is a mixture of French and English, quite puzzling to the uninitiated. During the Civil War, although forced into the Confederate ranks, they were considered Unionists, and were kind to those who needed their help.

With a little mixture of fresh blood and some learning they might become much improved, and have higher aims than the possession of land enough to grow their corn and a sufficiency of "goujon" (gudgeon). They have suffered a great deal by the overflowing waters, even to making their escape from their houses in boats, or knocking the upper works off and floating to safety on the floor for a raft.

Washing-day is a sketch from life. These simple folks have no acquaintance apparently with the wash-board, nor do they employ

their knuckles. Placing their clothes upon a plank, either on the edge of a pool or the bayou, they draw their scanty drapery about them with the most reckless disregard to the exposure consequent, and squatting, or kneeling, beat them with a wooden bat. The approach of a stranger does not disconcert them much, if at all.

The Bayou Lafourche is higher than the surrounding country; and this picture shows the figures on top of the levee, or banquette, as the French residents call it. (1)

Very few, if any, criticisms of Acadian culture topped Waud's appraisal for overall negative reporting; however, a close scrutiny of his observations on Acadiana reveals contradictions, half-truths, and perhaps the writer's myopia. First of all, Waud's charge that the Acadians are "without energy . . . or ambition," that "to live without effort is their apparent aim in life," is directly contradicted by his characterization of working life along Bayou Lafourche. Waud goes so far as to suggest--unwittingly--that this part of Louisiana was one of the few areas where one could actually see large numbers of white men engaged in voluntary manual labors:

Our engraving shows the manner in which boats are drawn when the wind is favorable. Those with sails set are progressing in the other direction. To see these men laboring along in the noonday heat of the sun, hauling their boats, is sufficient proof that white men can work in the South as well as negroes. Besides these Acadian boatmen of the bayous I saw other



white men at work in this part of Louisiana; these were making sugar on their own plantations, and told me they stood it very well. People unaccustomed to the climate would probably grow sick, from the continual heat and dampness of the atmosphere; but it is certain that



the whites born here can work in the fields if they choose. (2)

Laziness, certainly not an admirable characteristic in Victorian America, is promoted by Waud as a chief characteristic of Acadian life. Yet he partially negates his thesis by implication. He makes a point of emphasizing the viability of white manual labor in an Acadian setting.

Waud's superficial survey of Southern culture, conducted for a brief period in 1866, very likely found hard-working people in Acadiana. Unlike most regions of the lowland South, the Acadian realm had always placed a heavy reliance on white manual labor. Capital had always been scarce. The numerous *petits habitants* frequently composed a majority of the Acadian parishes' free population, and they did not normally employ Negro laborers, relying instead upon a cheaper labor source—their sons. (3) Any Acadian who had owned slaves before the Civil War or who employed plantation workers afterward was a member of a minority which had adopted the life style of neighboring Creole or Anglo-Saxon planter-capitalists. In a very real sense, the Acadian population had relatively less to do with the exploitation of black labor than was customary in other parts of the South both before and after the war. (4)

Some more of Waud's generalizations deserve at least a brief perusal. He suggests, for example, that "fresh blood and some learning" would possibly have ended the rigors and privations of subsistence farming. Nevertheless, Acadiana had a

more diversified and productive agriculture than most other areas of the rural South. Grinding poverty often stalked the Anglo-Saxon piney woods, while Acadiana's floodplains, bluffslands, and prairies usually exhibited greater economic self-sufficiency and population growth. At least one Anglo-Saxon critic, Colonel Samuel H. Lockett, described the overall economy, human diet, and agricultural resource base of piney woods Louisiana as being inferior to that of the Southwest. It is also noteworthy that Lockett made these concessions despite his mild resentment of Acadian manners and the "Creole patois." (5)

Inbreeding was not solely an Acadian phenomenon; isolation and underpopulation along the Southern and Western frontiers frequently induced marriage between cousins or the alternative—celibacy. Waud seems to suggest, however, that the consanguineous marriage was somehow typical and unique in its application. Waud could have ironically taken the opportunity of congratulating many Acadians on their "purity of blood," since this was the rage among so many of his Anglo-American contemporaries who professed the tenets of Social Darwinism. (6)

On the other hand, the author's remarks concerning the alleged immodesty of the Acadian washerwoman seems designed to titillate his readers, most of whom were Northern Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Since early abolitionist times, they had at least a vague awareness that Southern culture harbored a distinctively provocative theme of sexuality. Today, Waud's artistic

2. A. R. Waud, "Boats on the Bayou Lafourche," *Harper's Weekly* (October 13, 1866), 854.

3. Roger W. Shugg, *Origins of Class Struggle in Louisiana: A Social History of White Formers and Laborers during Slavery and After, 1840-1875* (Baton Rouge, 1939), pp. 6, 12, 47-49, 93, 99-100; Lauren C. Post, *Cajun Sketches: From the Prairies of Southwest Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1962), p. 4.

4. William Ivy Hair, *Bourbonism and Agrarian Protest: Louisiana Politics, 1877-1900* (Baton Rouge, 1969), pp. 39-40; Post, *Cajun Sketches*, pp. 65-62.

5. Lauren C. Post, ed., *Louisiana As It Is: A Geographical and Topographical Description of the State*, Samuel H. Lockett (Baton Rouge, 1969), pp. 25, 47-48.

6. See, for example, E. Digby Baltzell, *The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Caste in America* (New York, 1964), pp. 104-105, 158, 168, 176-177.

portrayal does not appear as very shocking, but many a Victorian eye could discern an undercurrent of allurements and lechery. Waud is also ambivalent. While he scoldingly notes the technological simplicity of a clothes plank or a ferry boat on Berwick Bay, he is also intrigued with the culture's picturesque qualities:

As the business done between the opposite shores of this beautiful sheet of water is limited, so the ferry arrangements are of the most primitive character--a flat-boat propelled by a couple of negroes, who push the oars instead of pulling them. Infinitely picturesque, however, is this boat, with its freight of oxen, country carts, stray Texans with their mustangs, Acadians, and negroes, forming a picture, as it floats by the moss-draped oaks, exceedingly attractive to an artist's eye. (7)

Like so many previous visitors, Waud described Acadiana's landscape in terms that evoked an eerie romanticism. Harriet Beecher Stowe, in presenting her decadent and vegetative backdrop to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and Harriet Martineau, after entering New Orleans' swampy hinterlands, reveal similar impressions. (8) Together, their Northern eyes focus upon a scene both hypnotic and repellent, but always tinged with that melancholia produced by the darker recesses of the forest:

The great feature of these Louisiana Swamps is the Spanish moss hanging in masses from the cypress-trees, whose gray trunks,

towering up without a leaf for 70 or 80 feet, are draped with it in most fantastic style. The trees closing together at the top shut out the light, so that the weird and funereal aspect of the place is perfect, presenting a forbidding appearance sufficient to appall a stranger. In



Ferryboat to Brashear City, ca. 1888

the slimy depths of the swamp--a network of bayous and pools--numbers of alligators exist, in company with turtles, snakes, etc. Birds and insects of brilliant colors dart through the sunny gleams that occasionally pierce the shadowy depths, where the white crane and shadowy heron stand sentinel among the sharp cypress knees, which grow up all round the parent trunks, and form no slight obstacle to him who, braving the mosquitoes and buffalo gnats, attempts to penetrate this domain. The pond-lily and many other aquatic plants grow luxuriantly in the ponds, filling the air with an overpowering

7. A. R. Weud, "Ferry-boat on Berwick Bay," *Harper's Weekly* (October 20, 1886), p. 670.

8. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (4th ed.; New York, 1966), pp. 366-375. Mrs. Stowe's chapter entitled "Dark Places" evokes a morbid and sinister vision of rural Louisiana. See also, Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*, 2 vols. (New York, 1837), II, 7-8. Miss Martineau's description of a Louisiana cypress swamp captures the romantic spirit of the early nineteenth century.

fragrance unknown to their sweeter
kindred growth . . . (9)

Waud's allusion to "Monsieur VULSIN" is not entirely clear, but it certainly does succeed in making the reader believe that all Acadians were highly superstitious. At the same time, his observations on widespread poverty in this region of the South were as appropriate as his depiction of the Attakapas country's wealthier class. But judging from the tenor of Waud's generalizations, the prosperous inhabitants stood apart from the ethic of the *petits habitants*:



Sugar Plantation Along Bayou Teche

The Bayou Teche--scene of Longfellow's 'Evangeline'--is the richest sugar country of the United States. The sketch is characteristic of the general appearance of the plantations of the banks of the river--a handsome family residence, snug negro quarters, and large, expensive sugar-mill. This bayou has always been one of the most attractive districts of Western Louisiana. (10)

Taken as a whole, Waud's description of Acadiana contained a mixture of truth,

exaggeration and downright misrepresentation that sustained a number of cherished stereotypes. Perhaps the superficiality of his social criticism was most damaging of all, since he did not closely examine his subjects by entering their homes or conversing in their native tongue. Like Colonel Lockett, Waud was apparently insulted in a very personal way by any fellow-citizen who refused to speak American English. Both of these travelers appear not unlike modern-day American tourists who vow never to endure the day-to-day discomforts of visiting a non-English-speaking country. It was as if a member of a privileged majority suddenly found himself a part of a vulnerable minority and--however briefly--diagnosed the problem as that of the engulfing society's and not his alone.

Besides the language barrier, nineteenth-century travellers' views of Acadiana were tinged by the Cajuns' rejection of the basic American values, such as the acquisition of great wealth as a positive good, tiresome temperance, an unwavering faith in technology, and Protestant concepts of religious orthodoxy. Either through lack of contact or indifference, rural South Louisiana remained largely impervious to the blandishments of the larger and more aggressive Anglo-American society, which was cocksure of its own natural superiority and proud destiny.

An Anglo-Saxon observer, Albert Rhodes, attempted to explain the scope of American frustration with South Louisiana's legacy of French culture. He lumped the Acadian with the Creoles and contrasted the slow-moving Latins with the energy and fire of American civilization. "One is like a steam-tug," he said, "wheezing, tugging, and tossing; the other [is] like a Nile-boat loitering along the shores of lotus-land." (11) During the Reconstruction Era, Rhodes claimed that

9. A. R. Waud, "Cypress Swamp in Louisiana," *Harper's Weekly* (December 8, 1866), 789.

10. Waud, "Sugar Plantation on Bayou Teche," *Ibid.*

11. Albert Rhodes, "The Louisiana Creoles," *The Galaxy*, XVI (July, 1873), 253.

American impatience with the slow pace of acculturation had reached the boiling point:

The American is only satisfied when all foreign elements are thrown into the national turning shop and come out turned to his own exact proportions. The Creoles for generations have steadily refused to be planed, and this irritates the American. He of Anglo-Saxon stock regards American civilization as the highest in the world, and insists that this Creole native shall square himself to it, but he persistently refuses—he prefers his own. Elsewhere the turning shop works successfully. The Indians are shaved down almost to annihilation; Mexicans of California and Texas assume the national shape; Alaskans even are being cut down to the required model; and as for the Irish, they are hardly landed on the Battery before declarations are filed and they are turned out after the approved pattern. The Creole alone resists, and to the urgent demands of the Anglo-Saxon neighbor his 'Non, monsieur,' comes back as unerringly as the refrain of Poe's raven. (12)

In his analysis of the Latin littoral, Rhodes singles out the Acadian as the least accomplished member of society. His list of errors is strikingly similar to Waud's earlier characterization. Acadians are slothful, poverty-infested, inbred, and fearful of technological change. His casual reference on the general level of intelligence is extremely harmful and misleading in its implications. When the author describes the Acadians as "the least intelligent of the

Creole population," he is most likely referring to their knowledge of current events and their curiosity about the outside world. As the statement stands, a reader could assume that the population is somehow innately incapacitated. The only positive trait was the Acadian's alleged ability to relax and genuinely enjoy life:

The Acadians—abbreviated to 'Cajens' by our laconic race—form a small portion of the Creole population. They first settled in Nova Scotia, and thence proceeded to Louisiana, where they have clung to their little possessions with tenacity ever since. They turn up the soil and cultivate the cane like the first settlers, and are but meagerly successful. They *detest innovation*, and the steam plough and the new-fangled sugar-house are not in favor. To adopt them involves outlay, risk, much thinking and fretting. It is simpler to give them a wide berth, and digest well by day and sleep well at nights. This is Acadian philosophy.

The American employs the word Acadian in an uncomplimentary sense. A *Utopian dreamer* and *idler* is implied—one who sits on the skirts of progress. The reproaching American delves and digs in the shadow of life while his *cheerful neighbor* pleasantly basks in the sunshine. To one, the world is a workshop; to the other, a *great fair*. The Acadians are the *least intelligent* of the Creole population, and occupy small patches of land along bayous and the coast, which are just sufficient in extent to satisfy the wants of their *simple lives*. Their dwellings usually contain two chambers, are of one-story, and

barely peep above the bayou ridge and the level coast. A curtain frequently hangs across the doorway to keep out the mosquitoes. This is an object of luxury, for, however much these insects annoy strangers, they trouble the indigenes very little. The latter aver that the *richer blood* of the new-comer offers a daintier feast and invites attack, and that there is no remedy save in continuous residence. Be that as it may, the sojourner soon discovers that these pests poison the pleasure of daily life during the eight or nine months of the year. Indeed, some may be seen throughout the twelve. Generally the little house of the Acadians is surrounded by a small orange grove, which is the principal support of the family. Before the oranges are ripe, cunning fruit-vendors from the city buy them on the tree for future delivery. The part behind the house is usually devoted to the cultivation of cane, which some *more affluent neighbor* grinds for the owner on shares. To make one hoghead of sugar is usually the height of Acadian ambition; to make two is to bathe in Pactolian waters. (13)

The charge of incomparable ignorance was repeatedly levelled against the Acadian culture throughout the nineteenth century. Previous analyses of this common Anglo-Saxon criticism have stressed that the Acadiens' inability to speak English and their refusal to take part in any American cultural activity prompted much of this

derisive commentary. (14) And yet many interested readers outside Louisiana very likely got the impression that the Acadian was simply uneducable. As early as 1829, an American visitor from neighboring Mississippi took heart that his fellow Anglo-Americans were moving into the countryside along Bayou Lafourche. Sargeant Smith Prentiss, a gentleman from the Natchez region, lamented that the French population had failed to develop their area by building a culture of sugar plantations based on American Negro slavery. He obviously scorned their isolationism and their small subsistence farms:

...This part of the State has just begun to be settled by the Americans. It had been considered of little account till within a few years; when, upon examination, it was found to contain the best sugar lands in the United States, and perhaps in the world. It has, however, been settled for some time, by the French--and even at present, they form at least nine-tenths of the population. They are the poorest, most ignorant, set of beings you ever saw--without the least enterprise or industry. They raise only a little corn and a few sweet potatoes--merely sufficient to support life; yet they seem perfectly contented and happy, and have balls almost every day--I attended one, and was invited to several others. (15)

Another antebellum gentleman, W. H. Sparks, noted rather glumly that the energy

13. *Ibid.*, p. 254. Italics are my own.

14. T. Lynn Smith and Vernon J. Parenton, "Acculturation Among the Louisiense French," *The American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV (November, 1938), 355-364; Edwin L. Stephens, "The Story of Acadian Education in Louisiana," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XVIII (July, 1935), 397-406.

15. S. S. Prentiss to William Prentiss, April 9, 1829, as cited in *A Memoir of S. S. Prentiss*, ed. by G. L. Prentiss, 2 vols. (New York, 1855), I, 94-95; see also, Charles S. Sydnor, "Sargeant Smith Prentiss," *The Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1946), XV, 191-192.



Frederick Law Olmsted

and drive of the Americans failed to inspire the Acadian settlers of the Lafourche district. "They were content and unenvious," he said, "and when kindly received and respectfully treated, were social and generous in their intercourse with their American neighbors." Acculturation was slow or non-existent. In many communities schools were virtually unknown. Perhaps not one in fifty persons could read or write. Sparks claimed that the widespread illiteracy made most legal proceedings difficult, to say the least. (16)

Nevertheless, the Anglo-Saxon and Creole aristocracy had other reasons for disdaining the life style of this lower stratum of poor whites. The typical *petit habitant* was a serious threat to the order and tranquillity of the slave regime. The Acadian was a free man who owned his

small, long lot and managed to feed himself and his large family rather well with the produce and livestock of his own holding. Basic clothing and shelter were also provided. All this was possible without forced labor, a discriminatory class and caste system, and an elaborate institutional framework which enforced privilege and prestige for a few and degradation for many. The demoralizing influence of the small Acadian farmer was best described by Frederick Law Olmsted who visited a large sugar plantation on the Mississippi River "Coast" during the decade before the Civil War. The humble Acadian, when curiously juxtaposed with the ostentatious squire, was the ultimate anomaly within the civilization of the Old South:

At one corner of Mr. R.'s

16. W. H. Sparks, *The Memories of Fifty Years: Containing Brief Biographical Notices of Distinguished Americans, and Anecdotes of Remarkable Men; Interspersed with Scenes and Incidents Occurring during a Long Life of Observation Chiefly spent in the Southwest*, 4th ed. (Philadelphia, 1882), pp. 376-377.

plantation, there was a hamlet of Acadians (descendants of the refugees of Acadia), about a dozen small houses or huts, built of wood or clay, in the old French peasant style. The residents owned small farms, on which they raised a little corn and rice; but Mr. R. described them as lazy vagabonds, doing but little work, and spending much time in shooting, fishing and play. He wanted very much to buy all their land, and get them to move away. He had already bought out some of them, and had made arrangements to get hold of the land of some of the rest. He was willing to pay them two or three times as much as their property was actually worth, to get them to move off. As fast as he got possession, he destroyed their houses and gardens, removed their fences and trees, and brought all their land into his cane plantation.

Some of them were mechanics. One was a very good mason, and he employed him in building his sugar works and refinery; but he would be glad to get rid of them all, and should then depend entirely on slave mechanics--of these he had several already, and he could buy more when he needed them.

Why did he so dislike to have these poor people living near him? Because, he said, they demoralized his negroes. The slaves seeing them living in apparent comfort, without much property and without steady labor, could not help thinking that it was not necessary for men to work so hard as they themselves were obliged to; that if they were free they would not need to work. Besides, the intercourse of these people with the negroes to do them

little services, and would pay them with luxuries which he did not wish them to have. It was better that negroes never saw anybody off their own plantation; that they had no intercourse with other white men than their owner or overseer; especially, it was best that they should not see white men who did not command their respect, and whom they did not always feel to be superior to themselves, and able to command them. (17)

Olmsted also obtained a rare evaluation of the Acadians from an articulate slave named William who accompanied this noted antebellum traveller on a tour of Mr. R's plantation. In speaking to the Northern visitor, it is apparent that this antebellum black man did not regard the neighboring whites in the same light as his master:

We were passing a hamlet of cottages, occupied by Acadians, or what the planters call *habitant*s, poor white, French Creoles. The negroes had always been represented to me as despising the habitants, looking upon them as their own inferiors; but William spoke of them respectfully; and, when I tempted him to sneer at their indolence and vagabond habits, he refused to do so, but insisted very strenuously that they were 'very good people,' orderly and industrious. He assured me that I was mistaken in supposing that the Creoles, who did not own slaves, did not live comfortably, or that they did not work as hard as they ought to for their living. There were no better sort of people than they were, he thought.

Some of the cottagers were engaged in threshing rice, which they performed by the ancient process of treading with horses walking in a circle. There were five horses, and three men driving them . . . (18)

Olmsted was not alone in his positive account of Acadian civilization. A decade after the Civil War, another writer spoke of Louisiana's "Cadians" as "industrious and prosperous" people. (19) Charles Nordoff, author of several well known works of English literature, had traveled throughout much of the "Reconstructed" South during the spring and summer of 1875, and he suggested that the *petits habitants* may have occupied a socio-economic niche above that of the Anglo-Saxon poor white of Louisiana's northern piney woods:

They [Acadians] speak French, and retain many of their old French customs. They live a good deal among themselves, and do not even care to trade with the Americans, whom, though they have occupied the country ever since the acquisition of Louisiana, the Acadian still regards as interlopers. In other parts of the State there is a population of white farmers who cultivate the thin uplands. They have been much neglected, and are not very highly thought of by their neighbors in the lowlands. (20)

Colonel Samuel H. Lockett, the previously mentioned Confederate soldier who later became a college professor and

surveyor, placed the Acadian and the piney woods inhabitant on roughly the same economic level. He, incidentally, had experienced relatively close contact with both groups during his intensive geographic surveys compiled between 1867 and 1873. Lockett attempted to explain the poverty among his Anglo-Saxon brothers and sisters, for example, by pointing out the limitations of soil, forest, and remote location. (21) His chief criticism of the "Piny Woods" population centered on their repetitive and poorly prepared diet:

The greatest drawback to the people in the pine woods is the manner in which they live, I mean the food they eat. Three times a day for nearly 365 days of the year, their simple meal is coarse corn bread and *fried* bacon. At dinner there will be added perhaps "collards" or some other coarse vegetable. Even when they have fresh meat or venison, which they can obtain whenever they wish, it is always *fried* and comes to the table swimming in a sea of clear, melted lard. Chickens, eggs, milk and butter, all kinds of vegetables and fruit they could have, but have not. I really believe that the best missionary to send among them would be a disciple of A. Soyer, the great French cook. Let him preach "good health by good living," distribute throughout the Piny Woods and, in fact, throughout the rural districts of much of our southern country, *dime cookery-books*, and *smash all the frying pans*, and the mental, moral, and

18. *Ibid.*, p. 342.

19. Charles Nordhoff, *The Cotton States in the Spring and Summer of 1875*, 2nd ed. (New York, n. d.), p. 73. Europeans, however, do not automatically place the Acadian in the lowest white stratum.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Post, ed., *Louisiana As It Is*, pp. 47-48.

physical condition of the population would soon be immensely improved. (22)

Lockett's social criticism of the prairie population was more multi-faceted. He generally characterized Acadians as "a rather thriftless people," and he averred that, as a rule, they were "kind, hospitable, and sociable amongst themselves, but shy and suspicious of a stranger." Lockett went on to say that if the stranger did not speak French the Acadian reception was all the more icy. (23) This suspicion of the stranger, particularly the "American interloper," undoubtedly was related to unsatisfactory business dealings in the past.

W. H. Sparks, in his appraisal of Acadian-American business relations, described the native population as "confiding and trustful" of a new American neighbor, "but once deceived, they were not to be won back, but only manifested their resentment by withdrawing from communicating with the deceiver, and ever after distrusting, and refusing him their confidence." (24)

Within the Acadian community, the priest was the "universal arbiter in all disputes." His word was final. But when the aggressive Anglo-Saxon sugar planters began to super-impose their new agricultural patterns in the established Acadian settlements along Bayous Lafourche and Teche, there had to be a different recourse. While in the process of nudging the Acadian off of his small farm, the planter and land speculator invariably resorted to extreme methods. Sparks, himself a friend of the local squirearchy, remarked that the Acadians were perhaps too conscientious for their own good. "They had a horror of debt, and lawsuits,

and would sacrifice any property they might have," he said, "to meet punctually an obligation." (25) Clearly, this gentle business ethic was at a serious disadvantage when used defensively against the abrasive competition and cutthroat expedience commonly found in the encroaching American commerce.

Another contemporary observer, R. L. Daniels, confirmed the afore-mentioned generalizations. "Of Americans as a class," he said, the Acadians "have not the highest opinion." The writer noted that "Southerners as well as Northerners are 'Yankees,' unless regarded with exceptional favor." Dishonest commercial dealings brought forth the ultimate epithet. "If one of their own people is shrewd or tricky in business transactions, he is unceremoniously designated a 'Yankee.'" (26)

Colonel Lockett was also quick to point out that the Acadian work schedule differed from that of the Anglo-Saxon's. It often did not suit the convenience of the latter. Lockett buttressed his argument with native testimony—that of Monsieur Joe Chaumont, ferry master of Bayou Nez Pique. When the former military officer betrayed an impatience to resume his journey after his horse had foundered, Monsieur Chaumont, with an astonished air, attempted to soothe his restless guest:

Sir, you are not a Louisianian, or, at least, not a Creole—they all like to wait. You see I keep a blacksmith shop; well, a Creole will come here in the morning to get a horse shod, or a plough pointed, and when the job is done he will sit down and wait until another comes

22. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

24. Sparks, *The Memories of Fifty Years*, p. 377.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 378-377.

26. R. L. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," *Scribner's Monthly*, XIX (1880), 364.

along for company; the second will have his little job and before it is over, maybe a third will call for a small piece of work, and the two first will wait for him; and then they all come and eat dinner at my table, and after dinner they must wait until they have a smoke, and then till the cool of the evening, and so they wait and wait, and are always waiting for something.' I explained to M. Chaumont that I was not one of the waiting kind and again inquired where I could get a horse. (27)

The visiting Daniels was in agreement with Lockett's assessment of the local work ethic, but there was no undercurrent of snide criticism. "Without overtaking themselves," he said, "the Acadian who overworks is indeed a *rara avis*,—the most thrifty keep their places in good tobacco, peas and potatoes; and highland rice, also, if the soil is favorable." (28) On the other hand, Lockett saw little in the way of thrift as he trotted across the undulating prairies and somewhat haughtily surveyed the modest farmsteads:

The most of them [Acadians] are mere squatters on the Prairies. Their houses, half framed and half built of mud, are located sometimes on the open prairie, sometimes on the skirts of a belt of timber, and often without even a yard or garden enclosed. A neighboring *marais* will be surrounded by a rude *pieux* fence and a small crop of rice raised. Their horses and cattle run at all times on the common prairie. *Cafe noir* is their nectar, and Perique

tobacco their ambrosia. With thousands of cows roaming on the Prairies, you never see butter or milk in their houses. With the means around them of living well, they fare no better than the people of the pine woods . . . (29)

A common criticism often voiced by the visiting outsider concerned the lack of educational opportunities for the Acadian population. Lockett sardonically noted that "the schoolmaster is almost an unknown character among them, but they all learn to ride about as soon as they learn to walk." (30) Even Daniels, who was normally sympathetic, underscored the almost total lack of education, which he termed "the first vital element of change, in the direction of progress." (31) There was also an uncomplimentary inference that all too frequently the uneducated masses tended to be led by those who were of an unscrupulous nature:

. . . In many of their settlements there are no schools whatever. Now and then a child of the more prosperous class is sent off for a few months or, perhaps, for a year, to a Roman Catholic School. He who reads without very much halting and can write, or make others believe he can, is considered well-educated, and, with the requisite amount of shrewdness, may become an oracle in politics, and especially in business affairs, the calculations of which are 'carried in the head,' after the early manner of Daniel Drew. (32)

In fact, Daniels alleged that the Roman

27. Post, ad., *Louisiana As It Is*, p. 28.

28. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 384.

29. Post, ad., *Louisiana As It Is*, p. 51.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

31. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," p. 383.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 383-384.

Catholic Church reinforced class divisions within Acadian society and discouraged free public education among the poor. All too often the Church invested its energy and resources in constructing "expensive convents and colleges" which were not directly involved in improving the welfare of the average parishioner. "I have been informed," he said, "that when free schools were established in the parishes of St. Martin's and St. Mary's, after the close of the war, many Acadian children at first attended, but were withdrawn by their parents upon the protest of the Roman Catholic clergy." (33) It is likely that educational growth was stymied, at least in part, by the persistent struggle to maintain a religious orthodoxy. Unfortunately, the Church often failed to provide the alternative of an effective and widespread parochial school system. (34) The Church was one of the most important institutions in Acadians life. W. H. Sparks, in his recollections of antebellum times, applauded the "Christian virtues" of the local people and commented at length on their remarkable ability to combine simple social pleasures with the sober routines of church attendance and self-denial: (35)

... Fond of amusements, their social meetings, though of the most primitive character, were frequent and cordial. They observed strictly the exactions of the Church, especially Lent; but indulged the Carnival to its wildest extent. Out of Lent they met to dance and enjoy themselves, weekly, first at one, and then at another neighbor's house; and with the natural taste of their race, they would appear neatly and cleanly dressed in the attire

fabricated by their own hands in the loom and with the needle.

Marriages, almost universally, were celebrated at the church, as in all Catholic countries. The parsonage is at the church, and the priest always on hand, at the altar or the grave; and almost daily, in this dense population, a marriage or funeral was seen at the church. It was the custom for the bride and groom, with a party of friends, all on horseback, to repair without ceremony to the church, where they were united in matrimony by the good priest, who kissed the bride, a privilege he never failed to put into execution, when he blessed the couple, received his fee, and sent them away rejoicing. This ceremony was short, and without ostentation; and then the happy and expectant pair, often on the same horse, would return with the party as they had come, with two or three musicians playing the violin in merry tunes on horseback, as they joyfully galloped home, where a ball awaited them at night, and all went merry with the married belle. (36)

The closeness within an Acadian family was a subject which intrigued the visiting R. L. Daniels, who explained the high density pattern in rural areas as the product of "parental affection" and filial reciprocation. "What may originally have been a large plantation," he remarked, "is often divided and subdivided among children and grandchildren during the life of the first proprietor until further participation is impracticable." (37) No sacrifice was too great in order to keep the

33. *Ibid.*, 392.

34. Holr, *Bourbanism and Agrarian Protest*, pp. 62, 120-127.

35. Sparks, *The Memoriss of Fifty Years*, p. 376.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 377-378.

37. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 384.

children near the hearthside:

. . . The children mature and marry early, settling down on their *terrain* contentedly, be it small or otherwise, with no expectation or desire of ever leaving it, and the only subsequent improvements likely to be made are the addition of shed rooms to accommodate the rapidly increasing progeny. A girl of twelve years may take upon herself the responsibilities of wedded life with a helpmate but little older, and following the usages of their elders, these two will address and speak of each other as '*mon vieux*,' '*ma vieille*' ('old man,' 'old woman') with a naivete that is truly refreshing. Grandparents who have not reached the age of thirty are not infrequent among these people. (38)

Daniels viewed Acadian courtship as the most crucial and momentous occasion in the lives of the pubescent male and female. Bachelorhood, as a matter of fact, was a rare disease in early Acadiana:

. . . From early childhood, the boy is taught to look forward to the time when he shall be a man and marry a pretty girl. The ambition increases with his growth, and he seldom makes a mercenary match. If a man has the hardihood to prefer a single life, he must bear chaffing and taunts of lack of manliness, from his best friends. On the other hand, a man of family may attain a degree of importance that no bachelor may hope for . . . (39)

Victorian America likely had several misconceptions about Acadian morality and, more particularly, sexual mores. The hostile A. R. Waud, it will be remembered, described female dress and manners in such a manner as to project the image of the Acadian washerwoman as a wily seductress of the bayous, and, unfortunately, Waud's superficial jottings and arresting pictures in *Harper's Weekly* undoubtedly received larger readership than other contemporary writings which were sometimes based on a keen knowledge of French and a far greater intimacy with the culture of the Acadian people. Those Anglo-Saxons who studied their subject more carefully reported that Acadian society was inordinately proper and detailed in its guidelines for heterosexual conduct. Considering the pressures for group conformity and the consistent structures of the nineteenth-century Roman Church, it is probable that the Acadian subculture was the most Puritanical in the South.

Major-general Richard Taylor, a Confederate soldier and native of Kentucky, characterized the society's standards in the best possible light. The young officer had been educated in Edinburgh and in France, and he obviously had no difficulty in his contacts with the Acadian people while he commanded the District of West Louisiana between 1862 and 1864. Before the war's outbreak, young Taylor had managed his father's cotton plantation in neighboring Mississippi. Later, he became the cultured squire of "Fashion," a large sugar plantation in St. Charles Parish. (40) His fluent French and broad educational background were splendid accoutrements as he rode his horse across the Acadian prairies during his Louisiana campaigns. Indeed, one of his specific recollections of Acadian maidenhood conjures up a vision of Sir Walter Scott's chivalrous Ivanhoe

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*, p. 368.

40. Wendell H. Stephenson, "Richard Taylor," *The Dictionary of American Biography*, XVII, 340-341.



General Richard Taylor

enjoying a quiet repast before the morrow's tournament:

On an occasion, passing the little hamlet of Grand Coteau, I stopped to get some food for man and horse. A pretty maiden of fifteen springs, whose parents were absent, welcomed me. Her lustrous eyes and long lashes might have excited the envy of the 'dark-eyed girl of Cadiz.' Finding her alone, I was about to retire and try my fortune in another house; but she insisted that she could prepare '*monsieur un diner dans un tour de main*,' and she did. Seated by the window, looking modestly on the road, while I was enjoying her repast, she sprang to her feet, clapped her hands joyously, and exclaimed:

'*V'la le gros Jean Baptiste qui passe sur son mulet avec deux bocals. Ah! nous aurons grand bal ce soir.*' It appeared that one jug of claret meant a dance, but two very high jinks indeed. As my hostess declined any remuneration for her trouble, I begged her to accept a pair of plain gold sleeve buttons, my only ornaments. Wonder, delight, and gratitude chased each other across the pleasant face, and the confiding little creature put up her rose-bud mouth. In an instant the homely room became as the bower of Titanis, and I accepted the chaste salute with all the reverence of a subject for his Queen, then rode away with uncovered head so long as she remained in sight. Hospitable little maiden of Grand



Acadian Girl

Coteau, may you never have graver fault to confess than the innocent caress you bestowed on the stranger!

It was to this earthly paradise, and upon this simple race, that the war came, like the tree of the knowledge of evil to our early parents. (41)

A decade later, another Anglo-Saxon commented at length on the hospitality he received at Grand Coteau's St. Charles College and Sacred Heart Convent. Former Confederate Samuel Lockett, despite his Francophobia, managed to establish an excellent rapport with the hospitable nuns. "The Convent is a

beautiful building surrounded by an exquisite garden," said Lockett, "Everything about it is the perfection of neatness, chasteness, and propriety." (42)

One of the most vivid descriptions of an Acadian maid was Charles Dudley Warner's touching portrait of Andonia Thibodeaux of Bayou Tigre in Vermilion Parish. As a result of his travels through the Acadian landscape of the 1880s, this famous American writer demonstrated a sophisticated understanding and sensitivity of human character uncommon to many previous visitors from the English-speaking world:

Resuming our voyage, we presently entered the inhabited part of the bayou, among cultivated fields, and made our first call on the Thibodeaux. They had been expecting us, and Andonia came down to the landing to welcome us, and with a formal, pretty courtesy led the way to the house. Does the reader happen to remember, say in New England, say fifty years ago, the sweetest maiden lady in the village, prim, staid, full of kindness, the proportions of the figure never quite developed, with a row of small corkscrew curls about her serene forehead, and all the juices of life that might have overflowed into the life of others somehow withered into the sweetness of her wistful face? Yes; a little timid and appealing, and yet trustful, and in a scant, quaint gown? Well, Andonia was never married, and she had such curls, and a high-waisted gown, and a kerchief folded across her breast; and when she spoke, it was in the language of France as it is rendered

41. Richard Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War* (New York, 1879), pp. 106-107.

42. Post, ed., *Louisiana As It Is*, p. 24.



Artist's Conception of the 1840
St. Martin Parish Courthouse

Sketch by R. Werren Robison

in Acedia.

. . . Andonia showed us with a blush of pride her neat little sleeping-room, with its souvenirs of affection, and perhaps some of the dried flowers of a possible romance, and the ladies admired the finely woven white counterpane on the bed. Andonia's married sister was a large, handsome woman, smiling and prosperous. There were children and, I think, a baby about, besides Mr. Thibodeaux. Nothing could exceed the kindly manner of these people When we departed Andonia slipped into the door-yard, and returned with a rose

for each of us. I fancied she was loath to have us go, and that the visit was an event in the monotony of her single life. (43)

This happy encounter in the marshland-tinged with just a trace of sadness—was indelibly stamped in the mind of Warner. After visiting with other beyou folk, the author and his party once more floated past the Thibodeaux cottage. "The doors and shutters were closed, and mansion seemed blank and forgetful," said Warner in a disappointed tone. "But as we came opposite the landing, there stood Andonia, faithful, waving her handkerchief. Ah me!" (44)

43. Charles Dudley Werner, "The Acedian Lend," *Studies in the South and West with Comments on Canodo* (New York, 1889), pp. 92-93; see also, "Charles Dudley Werner," *The Notional Cyclopedio of American Biogrophy*, 51 vols. (New York, 1937), II, 116-117.

44. Werner, "The Acedian Lend," 98.

(To Be Continued)

BOOK REVIEWS

NOUS SOMMES ACADIENS. By Myron Tassin. Photography by Fonville Winans. (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 1976. 96 pp. \$4.95.)

Fonville Winans travelled the bayou country in the 1920s and 1930s, recording people, landscapes, and customs. His photographs, in many cases, are just as valid today as they were when originally taken. Myron Tassin, a Baton Rouge public relations consultant, has sensitively arranged those photographs to tell the story of the Acadians, past and present.

Unlike many recent reporters, he has selected photographs which emphasize the dual aspect of Acadian life: good times and hard work. As he says under a stunning photograph of a salt tunnel: "To us, 'working the salt mines' is an opportunity, not a cross." But, he adds: "As we toil, we think of the next meal, a can of cold Dixie with a neighbor, duck season. The next bouree game. A gumbo file with a few drops of tabasco added for flavor and zest. Talk about good!" And it is hard to decide whether the accompanying photograph—an oyster man in the middle of his catch—depicts toil or play.

Nous Sommes Acadiens captures many aspects of the Cajuns, religious, but fun-loving; hard working, but relaxed; highly political, but sceptical of politicians. Tassin and Winans show the attachment of Cajuns for their land, their church, their family, as well as the close relationship which they have established with the environment. This is a book every Acadian should be proud to read.

University of Southwestern Louisiana

Mathe Allain

THE CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION IN LOUISIANA: A STUDY IN NEW DEAL RELIEF, 1933-1934. By Virgil L. Mitchell. (Lafayette: The U.S.L. History Series, 1976). 159 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, tables, index. \$3.95.)

Much confusion surrounds the various federal relief agencies which operated in Louisiana during the great depression. Federal bureaucratic propensity for using initials, such as WPA, PWA, and CWA, to identify the agencies only added to the confusion. Professor Mitchell's monograph on the Civil Works Administration in Louisiana reduces some of the confusion by clarifying the purpose, role, and accomplishments of that agency during its short life span.

Scholarly assessment of the CWA has ranged from the negative assertion that its program was restricted to grass cutting and leaf raking, to the positive assertion that the CWA averted a revolution. Professor Mitchell demonstrates that, in Louisiana, the CWA alleviated unemployment and provided temporary relief to approximately 300,000 persons. The CWA was created as a stop-gap agency to provide immediate employment during the winter of 1933-1934, while a more permanent relief agency, the Public Works Administration, was being organized.

Mitchell's work resulted from painstaking research in the primary sources, particularly the records of the Civil Works Administration. Unfortunately, the work is limited to a

statistical analysis of projects started, completed, or terminated; and the number of people employed. No effort was made to analyze the human impact of the program except in statistical terms. Despite this deficiency, however, the work accomplishes its stated objective of determining whether the CWA fulfilled its purpose. The numerous tables and illustrations prove conclusively that, at least in Louisiana, the vast majority of projects were not leaf cutting and grass raking.

This work is not the social analysis of the depression period that one might have hoped. It does, however, represent the type of research needed to lay the foundation for a good social history.

Eunice

Claude Oubre

FEDERAL LAND GRANTS IN THE TERRITORY OF ORLEANS: THE DELTA PARISHES. By Charles R. Maduell, Jr. (New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1975. 405pp. \$10.)

In 1812, the federal government confirmed the landholdings in the new state of Louisiana and registered the lands which had been granted by the French or the Spanish government, sold or transferred, or continually occupied for more than ten years. The present volume, limited to the Delta Parishes, summarizes the *American State Papers, Public Lands, Volume II*, which contains the land registration for the twelve Louisiana counties established in 1805. Six of the above mentioned counties are covered by Maduell's work. The listings for each county are moreover subdivided; the County of Acadia, for example, has a listing for the east and west banks of the Mississippi as well as the right and left banks of Bayou Lafourche. This organization facilitates analysis of the settlement patterns along various Louisiana waterways, and, by comparing this information with subsequent surveys, the migrations of the Acadians from the banks of the Mississippi to the western part of the state. Maduell's rearrangement of the material allows the story of settlement and land occupation to emerge from the confusing mass of information contained in the *American State Papers*.

Since each listing of land grants is followed by a complete index of names, *Federal Land Grants in the Territory of Orleans* should prove useful and easy to use to genealogist.

University of Southwestern Louisiana

Mathé Allain

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

[Editor's Note: This is the first in a continuing series of translations of the Attakapas commandants' correspondence during the Spanish Period. Translations of these letters, microfilm copies of which are on deposit at Southwestern Archives, University of Southwestern Louisiana, will appear in the order in which they were found in the legajos of the Papeles Procedentes de Cuba.]

THE DECLOUET-BERARD FEUD

Translated by Carl A. Brasseaux

General,

I have the honor of informing you that the negresse belonging to the post's cure voluntarily cut her left wrist in order to end her servitude. She is a bad subject who more readily merits death than life.

I was unable to refuse Berard permission to travel to New Orleans to pay his debts. As I have indicated, this man has become a pernicious influence in this post as a result of insubordinate traits which could influence the disposition of the Acadians, two-thirds of whom are related to his wife. I have the honor of entreating you to punish him with several days imprisonment and by refusing to permit him to return to Opelousas, where he will not cease to disturb the public tranquillity so necessary in this area. I have the same sum to assess, and I dare to hope that none of his [Dacosta's] claims will be validated by Your Excellency, to whom I request that which is mine.—Mr. Dacosta.

My general,

I have the honor to be, with respect,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

Chevalier DeClouet

ORDINANCE REGULATING CONCESSIONS AND CATTLE
IN SPANISH LOUISIANA, 1770

Translated by Paulette Guilbert Martin

Don Alexander O'Reilly, commandant in the Order of Alcantara, general inspector of the infantry, charged with the government and captain-generalcy of this province of Louisiana.

Several complaints and requests which were sent to us by the settlers of Opelousas, Attakapas, Natchitoches and other districts of this province, as well as the knowledge which we have acquired of the place, its culture and the settlers' means of livelihood during our recent visit to the German Coast, the Acadians, and Iberville and the Pointe Coupee districts and also having personally verified the reports of the settlers whom we had ordered to assemble in each district, have demonstrated to us that the tranquility of the above-mentioned settlers and the development of farming in this province demanded a new set of regulations establishing the size of the concessions to be given in the future and regulating the fences, clearings, roads and bridges which the settlers must maintain, as well as damages caused by cattle for which the owners will be responsible.

For these reasons, and as we seek nothing but the public good and the settlers' satisfaction in all things, we have regulated, after hearing several persons who are very knowledgeable in these matters, all of these questions in the following articles:

1. Each new family desiring to settle along the river will receive property six-to-eight arpents wide (according to the farmer's means) by forty arpents deep, so that he may enjoy the cypress grove which is as necessary as useful to farmers.
2. Those having received concessions along the river will have to build, during the first three years of possession, levees sufficient for the preservation of the lands, as well as ditches necessary for the drainage of water. Furthermore, they will maintain highways in good order and a width of at least forty feet between the interior ditch lying along the levee and the gate, with twelve-foot bridges over the ditches crossing the road.

The same concessionaries for the first three years of ownership will have to clear land two arpents deep. Should they not fulfill these conditions, their land will revert to the king and will be conceded again. The judge of each district will be held responsible to the governor for the enforcement of this ruling.

3. The aforementioned concessions will not be sold or transferred by the owners before three years of ownership and after the above-mentioned conditions have been completely fulfilled. To avoid any surprise in this matter, the sale of said lands will not occur without a written permit from the governor-general who will grant it only after an exact inspection indicating that the above-mentioned conditions have been duly fulfilled.

4. As the points formed by the lands along the Mississippi have very little depth in some places, twelve arpents frontage can be granted in this case, provided these points are unclaimed. They will be divided among the adjoining neighbors in order that road communications will be easy and practicable, without interruption.
5. Should land belonging to minors lie fallow and their levees and roads fall into disrepair, the district judge will ascertain the reason why it is so. If the fault lies with the tutor, he [the judge] will order him to quickly comply with the present regulations. But if the cause is the minors' lack of means, the judge, having ascertained the fact, will report it to the governor-general through an official statement in order that the land may be sold for the benefit of the minors (a special favor granted solely to minors). But if there are no buyers within six months, said land will be given gratis.
6. Within three years, each settler will have to build fences along the front of his land, which is to be cleared. As for the fences along the sides, he, the owner, will come to an agreement with his neighbors in proportion to what has been cleared and according to his means.
7. Cattle will be allowed to roam from November 11 to March 15 of the following year. In other times everyone will be responsible for the damage caused to neighbors' property by their cattle. These will complain to the district judge who will ascertain the extent of the damage and appoint experts to estimate the loss. He will then order compensation without delay.
8. No concession located in Opelousas, Attakapas and Natchitoches will exceed one league frontage by one league in depth. But when the connected land does not have that depth, one may grant a league and a half frontage by a half-league in depth.
9. In order to obtain a concession of forty-two arpents frontage by forty-two arpents depth in Opelousas, Attakapas and Natchitoches, a settler will have to prove that he owns one hundred domesticated head of cattle, some horses and sheep, and that he has two slaves to tend to them. This proportion will always be in effect for concessions located in the above-mentioned places, without ever granting larger ones other than in conformity with the preceding article.
10. All the cattle will be branded by the owner. Those who will fail to brand them by the age of eighteen months will be unable to claim them as their own.
11. Nothing is more harmful to the settlers than stray cattle. Tame cattle cannot increase without the destruction of stray animals. Settlers will always suffer from this curse about which many complaints have been registered. But as all of the province has been overrun by stray cattle, we grant every cattleman the time—until July 1, 1771—to round up and kill for their profit said stray

cattle, after which time the said animals will be declared wild and can be killed by whomever wishes to do so, without anyone being able to oppose it nor to claim ownership thereof.

12. All concessions will be granted in the king's name by the governor-general who will, at the same time, appoint a surveyor to establish the boundaries, frontage and depth [of said land grant] in the presence of the ordinary district judge and the two adjoining settlers who will be present when the survey is made. The said four persons will sign the report which will be made, and the surveyor will make three copies, one of which will be deposited in the office of the government and the Cabildo scribe; the other will go to the governor-general; and the third will go to the owner who will add it to the concession title.

Using the powers which the king, our lord (may God preserve him), has kindly given us by letters patent, sent from Aranjuez on April 16, 1769 to establish a set of rules for the police and the administration of justice and finances which are suitable to the good of his services and the happiness of his subjects in this colony, except for the good will of his majesty, we order and command the governor, the judge, Cabildo, and all of this province's inhabitants to obey diligently what is prescribed in this set of rules.

New Orleans

February 18, 1770.

RIVER ROAD TOUR

Rita Davis has organized a River Road tour to generate funds for the restoration of Darby House. Al Landry will serve as narrator. For further information, contact Rita Davis at 329 Beverly Dr., Lafayette, La. 70503.

THE WOMEN IN LOUISIANA
COLLECTION ESTABLISHED AT USL

Glenn R. Conrad, director of the Center for Louisiana Studies, announces that Dr. Ray Authement, president of the University of Southwestern Louisiana, has recently authorized The Women in Louisiana Collection. As a division of the Center, the collection will serve as a statewide research resource for women's studies. The collection will be housed at Dupre Library on the U.S.L. campus. The first collection of its kind to be established in the state, it joins the ranks of similar collections in California, Georgia and Minnesota.

The growth of women's studies in recent years underscores the necessity for a major archive of original source material, photographs, personal papers and diaries of individual women and organizations. As early as 1922, the distinguished Historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, later named director of Radcliffe College's women's collection when it was established in 1943, deplored the absence of information on women. "From reading history in textbooks one would think half of our population made only a negligible contribution to history," he wrote. Certainly this neglect has been true in Louisiana history. The Women in Louisiana Collection will serve to fill the information

gap for Louisiana studies.

With its rich and diverse cultural background, Louisiana is a particularly fertile field for research in the contributions of women to the development of society. An analysis of the role and status of women within the various ethnic groups which blended to form modern Louisiana culture can make important methodological contributions to the historical understanding of the dynamics of social development. The experience of women has been ignored in the analysis of Louisiana's past, yet, as historian Mary Beard pointed out in the 1930s, women have for centuries been a force in history.

Vaughan Baker, assistant professor of history at U.S.L., has been appointed director of the collection. She will seek to work with individual women and with women's organizations to locate, describe and preserve records relating to the experience of women in Louisiana society from colonial times to the present and to make those materials available for research.

The collection will also contain materials useful to women's groups seeking background information for new social programs.

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Official Organ of the
Attakapas Historical Association
published in cooperation with the
Center for Louisiana Studies
University of Southwestern Louisiana

Managing Editor: Carl A. Brasseaux
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Circulation Manager: Anna Jane Marks

Dues Schedule:

Life membership for individuals: \$100.00

Annual dues for individuals:

- a. Active or Associate (out-of-state) membership: \$5.00
- b. Contributing membership: \$15.00
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Annual Institutional Dues:

- a. Regular: \$5.00
- b. Sustaining: \$10.00

Canadian dues: Same as American dues, payable in U. S. dollars.

Foreign dues: \$5.00 plus postage.

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P. O. Box 4-3010
University of Southwestern Louisiana
Lafayette, Louisiana 70504

Attakapas Gazette

Volume XII

Winter 1977

Number 4

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EARLY ACADIANA THROUGH ANGLO-AMERICAN EYES

By Timothy F. Reilly

PART II [Cont'd.]

According to Daniels, successful courtship of a young maiden required a good deal of finesse. A young male unacquainted with the diplomatic niceties would likely have had a disastrous experience with the young lady and her family. A young man, for example, ordinarily began his mating ritual by repeatedly prancing or racing his "courtin' horse" along the road in front of his maid's cottage. His excitement increased when family members and neighbors came to watch: (45)

... The sweets of courtship are necessarily expended on the old folks. Macaboy snuff à la vanille, a bottle of anisette, etc., for *maman* go far toward making the course of true love run smooth. With the old gentleman, tact at losing half-dimes at play is equally effective, always provided that the lover comes under the comprehensive descriptive "*bon garçon*." While thus courting the parents, he avails himself of every opportunity to make "sweet eyes" at the daughter, and, after a few

weeks of such wooing, proposes. The ball-room is generally the place . . . (46)

Invitations to the ball were simple and direct. A boy on a horse often paraded up and down the levee road waving a red or white flag. Later the same flag would be placed in front of the house where the dance would be held. (47) That night, the men and women sat apart, as was customary in all social affairs. Conversation between the sexes was restricted to the dancing period; the young woman spoke only when spoken to and was careful not to look into the eyes of the suitor. Daniels seemed overwhelmed by the almost total lack of privacy for the young couple:

... I once heard an Acadian woman remark, 'It ess permeet of les Americaine to look at de mans in de face, *mais nos demoiselles!*' finishing off with a significant shrug of her shoulders. On entering a room where there is company, one must shake hands with every person

45. *Ibid.*, p. 97; Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 387.

46. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 387-388.

47. Sparks, *The Memorials of Fifty Years*, p. 377.

in turn, whether acquainted or not. No one rises for the ceremony except, perhaps, the host or hostess. For a woman, old or young, married or single, to ride, walk, or be entirely alone for a few moments with any member of the opposite sex except father, son, or husband is a gross breach of the proprieties of which the worst may be, and is pretty certain to be, said. Nothing less than the direst extremity will make it excusable for even brother and sister, uncle and niece, to go anywhere together without the company of a third person. The only female who with safety can defy these established "usages" is the personage of supreme importance and assured privileges, the Acadian "Sairey Gamp." (48)

If the young man at last succeeded in winning his "belle," he had to obtain the approval of the girl's parents and almost all of her known relatives. This hurdle accomplished, the *fiancé* and his bride-elect always remained under continuous chaperonage. All of this meticulous surveillance was thought to guarantee the inevitability of marriage for the "tantalized lover." (49)

Weddings, according to Daniels, were joyful and festive occasions, and food and dancing were the main attractions. The visiting Warner, his mouth watering, spoke of typical big meal offerings such as "gumbo filé, fried oysters, eggs, sweet-potatoes (the delicious saccharine, sticky sort), with syrup out of a bottle served in little saucers, and afterwards black coffee." (50) Daniels, a master of local dialect, relayed the disappointment of one local "gate crasher"—a real professional—"who

always scented the aroma of bridal banquets from afar," and soon arrived at its source. "Wedding? *Ma foi!*" said he, "All nonsense—no feexens at all!" Unfortunately for him, the family was in mourning and therefore curtailed the festivities. Daniels noted that in a more tradition-bound community, a marriage ceremony of any kind would have been prohibited at such a time. (51)

Funerals and dangerous illnesses in the community were also reported as major social events. Relatives and friends filled the sick-room and openly discussed the patient's malady; doubts were voiced concerning the curative effect of prescribed medical remedies compared to home-brewed "*tisanes* and cataplasms." Tables were piled high with food, and coffee was served throughout the day and night. At a funeral follow-up, the sympathizers were said to "weep and lament in utter abandonment," and despite any words of encouragement for the sufferer, the author believed that most participants expected death to once again make its relentless appearance. (52) He may have indeed detected an undercurrent of fatalism so characteristic of Roman Catholic societies:

When all is over, the corpse is arrayed as for a gala day, new shoes being indispensable. A crucifix is laid upon the breast, lighted candles at the head and feet, a dish of holy water with a sprig of bay leaves, blessed on Palm Sunday, by the side. Everyone who approaches dips the leaves in the water, and sprinkles the inanimate form, murmuring a prayer for the repose of the soul. The singing of indescribably mournful hymns is kept up during the night by some of the

48. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 387.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 388.

50. *Ibid.*; Warner, "The Acadian Land," 97-98.

51. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 388.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 389.

numerous watchers; and not until the last moment is the body placed in the coffin. The most violent demonstrations of grief attend this sad office. At the church, if the family can afford the expense, lighted candles are given to those in attendance, and are carried in the procession to the grave, where once more the loss of the dead is bewailed. All interments are in the consecrated ground of churches near or in the towns. The time for mourning their dead is regulated, as they will tell you, by their religion. For an infant, from one to three months; a child, a brother, sister, aunt or uncle, six months; father, mother, husband or wife, one year. Black is worn during the prescribed season, and all amusements are utterly foregone; music, either vocal or instrumental, is considered sacrilegious. No people exceed the Acadians in conforming to the letter of the law, whether social, civil or religious. (53)

Acadian women seem to have received mixed reviews from the visiting journalists. Although Charles Dudley Warner almost invariably spoke of the entire culture admiringly, he thought that the ordinary housewife "usually showed the effects of isolation and toil," and he added that she resembled "the common plainness of French peasants." (54) The trenchant Daniels disagreed. He noted a tendency for a slender maiden to acquire a "permanent portliness after marriage and motherhood," but he otherwise described her as "seldom coarse featured, never angular in person, nor really awkward or uncouth in manner." He thought her very graceful, and he was attracted to her "smooth black hair,"

"liquid-jet eyes," and "olive-tinted complexion." (55) But Daniels apparently was a bit flustered by what he discerned as a mercurial temperament, and he seemed convinced that a predilection for gossip had been advanced to a rare art form:

The Acadian woman is capricious and quick-tempered, yet amiable and warm-hearted; for her anger is soon expended and frankly deplored. Neat and industrious, she fills her role of housewife during the week and enjoys her gossip on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. Gossip she must have; it is the spice of her uneventful life, the sole nutriment of her mental faculties; without it her existence would be dreary stagnation. The gossiping may often lean to censoriousness, yet if the tongue thoughtlessly wounds, the heart is pitiful and the hands are ever ready to minister to all physical necessities. But whatever she may be, she is always womanly and, with rare exceptions, virtuous. (56)



55. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 301.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 390.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 389-390.

54. Warner, "The Acadian Land," 96.

Neither did Daniels spare the menfolk from the charge of purveying artful gossip. The males, he testified, were often the worst babblers of all:

...The very prince of gossips, with whom nothing in the feminine line, to our knowledge compete, is usually some genial old fellow, who has handed over his possessions to his children for a consideration. Having nothing to do but to "distract" himself,—and we may safely add, his neighbors, also—he is always going from place to place, and always gossiping. He attends all the weddings and funerals, nurses all the sick, and cures those who get well. Of such as give up the ghost,—why, he can tell you exactly by whose fault it occurred. But, look you! it must go no further. (57)

Overdependence on community gossip was a necessity in a culture where there were few schools and usually a total absence of books in the home. Major General Taylor observed that practical news from the outside world normally drifted in on the tongues of "curés and occasional peddlers, who tempted the women with *chiffons* and trinkets." (58) With some depth of feeling, Taylor envisioned the *petit habitant* as "the French peasant of Fenelon and Bossuet, of Louis le Grand and his successor le Bien-Aimé." But as a transplanted Frenchman, his traditions were not those of "Voltaire and the encyclopaedists, the Convention and the Jacobins." The *petit habitant* was instead the passive cultivator of pre-Revolutionary France. (59)

According to Warner, none of the several homes he visited contained any discernible

reading material, and discussions of national or international affairs were certainly not a part of the household chatter:

...This is a purely domestic and patriarchal community, where there are no books to bring in agitating doubts, and few newspapers to disquiet the nerves. The only matter of politics broached was in regard to the appropriation by Congress to improve a cut-off between two bayous. So far as I could learn, the most intelligent of these people had no other interest in or concern about the Government.... (60)

At this point, it should be emphasized that this celebrated stereotype of provincial ignorance and illiteracy circulated widely throughout Victorian America. Unfortunately, that part of Acadian culture which was advancing did not usually receive the same amount of coverage among the visiting reporters. Daniels, however, was one critic who carefully acknowledged that much of the Acadian population was being slowly transformed through intermarriage with other groups, and with the adoption of English in business and education. Daniels separated the region into two parts—that of the growing town and navigable waterway where commerce and inter-cultural improvisation had been a way of life for several generations; and that of the backwater marsh, swamp, and frontier prairie where traditional Acadian life, though fairly pervasive, actually held a refugee status. (61) The exotic elements within the latter culture often supplied the best material for a feature on "typical Acadian life," with a Louisiana wilderness scene as a charming backdrop.

57. Ibid.

58. Taylor, *Destruction and Reconstruction*, p. 106.

59. Ibid.

60. Warner, "The Acadian Land," 390.

61. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 391-392.

Few writers could ignore the strong tradition of hospitality and charity which was the hallmark of Acadian society. Indeed, many close observers were often cognizant of the significant differences between Acadian hospitality and so-called Southern hospitality. While the latter had a good deal of substance, certain examples of the Acadian subcultural variety were difficult to duplicate elsewhere in the nation, at least on the same broad scale. "To assist a neighbor, whether in want of substance or in want of help, either in farming or building," according to Daniels, "is nothing more than being 'a good neighbor.'" (62) Sunday's entertainments, for example, were held in honor of friend and stranger alike:

...Sunday, after mass, is devoted to pleasure. Every family makes or receives visits. Numbers gather at certain houses famed for hospitality. A collation in the morning is indispensable, whether the guests be few or many. Pancakes, with molasses or honey, are handed round. If such dainties are not at command, sweet-potatoes, baked as only the Acadian housewife can bake them, are quite the rule. Coffee is always served. Not to offer some refreshment would be as unpardonable a breach of hospitality on the part of the hostess, as for the host to omit bringing forward his carafe of tafia or whisky. Then follows dinner, which begins with gumbo and ends with black coffee. Peanuts, popcorn or pecans help to kill time in the afternoon. All this is a matter of

course, and churlish indeed must be the family that does not entertain with equal bounty the respectable stranger, or the most shiftless wretch, that may enter the gates. (63)

A typical instance of Acadian charity was reported by Warner, who at one point entered the comfortable and "spotlessly clean" home of one Monsieur Vallet, "a man of means" who resided in Vermilion Parish. "Our call here was brief," said Warner, "for a sick man, very ill, they said lay in the front room." Warner described the individual as "a stranger who had been overtaken with fever, and was being cared for by these kind-hearted people." (64) Always implicit in remarks such as these is a sense of wonder that an Acadian family could, without a moment's hesitation, jeopardize health and safety for the sake of a stranger's life or perhaps a friend's prodigality.

Gentleness and humane treatment of one's fellows were themes that the visiting writers often perceived in other sectors of Acadian society, as well. There seemed to be a general agreement among critics that Acadians had a greater respect for human life and dignity than did their Anglo-Saxon brothers and sisters. Throughout the history of the world, the range of criminal violence has been an important index in measuring the worth of a civilization. The Acadian culture may well have been a comparatively peaceful island in the midst of the "violent South" of the late nineteenth century. (65)

An examination of male behavior, both on the job and in pursuit of recreational activities, disclosed little in the way of

62. *Ibid.*, 380.

63. *Ibid.*, 386-387.

64. Warner, "The Acadian Land," 93-94.

65. See, for example, Albert Bushnell Hart, *The Southern South* (New York, 1912), pp. 181-204, 361-385, 406-407; C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge, 1951), pp. 158-160; Shugg, *Origins of the Class Struggle in Louisiana*, pp. 58-61.

psychopathic frenzy or rampant disorder. In the antebellum period, the aristocracy-loving W. H. Sparks once paused to give the Acadian *fais do do*, a regular exercise in social democracy, honorable mention. This recreational high point of the week was described as invariably harmonious:

...All were welcome who came, and everything was conducted with strict regard to decent property. Nothing boisterous was ever known--no disputing or angry wrangling, for there was no cause given; harmony and happiness pervaded all, and at the proper time and in a proper manner all returned to their homes. (66)

Later in the century, author Daniels reported that while everyone attended the ball, respectable persons also patronized horse racing, cock fights, cards and keno. "Their enjoyment is a matter of taste," he said, "not a question of ethics." (67) Perhaps the greatest potential for violence occurred during elections, and even then blood did not customarily flow in the streets of Vermillionville or Abbeville:

...Elections are attended with great excitement. Primed with their favorite tafia, or cheap whisky which they call "rote gote,"--rotgut,--the voters are noisy and turbulent. Free fights are the order of the day; but, to their credit be it said, no weapons are used except such as are furnished by nature. To give his foe a black eye, or to make him cry '*Assez!*' is sufficient glory for the Acadian. (68)

While the younger men may not have had the Anglo-Saxon's enthusiasm for large-scale plantation agriculture, Daniels hailed them as "successful and indefatigable hunters, experts in the piscatorial art, agile riders, graceful dancers," and once again, "inveterate gossips." (69) The author seemed almost obsessed with this last point. Charles Dudley Warner, incidentally, was favorably impressed by one elderly gentleman and his family who leisurely combined fishing and planting in maintaining a comfortable livelihood. Simonette LeBlanc, a sturdy patriarch of Bayou Tigre, Vermilion Parish, was described as "the center of a very large family of sons, daughters, and grandchildren." His rambling house was adorned only by a few family photos, "the poor work of a travelling artist." (70) Interestingly, Monsieur LeBlanc's daily life patterns were perhaps little different from those of his father's generation and those of succeeding generations until the time of World War II:

Simonette Le Blanc, with several of his sons, had returned at midnight from an expedition to Vermilion Bay, where they had been camping for a couple of weeks, fishing and taking oysters. Working the schooner through the bayou at night had been fatiguing, and then there was supper, and all the news of the fortnight to be talked over, so that it was four o'clock before the house was at rest, but neither the hale old man nor his stalwart sons seemed the worse for the adventure. Such trips are not uncommon, for these people seem to have leisure for enjoyment, and

66. Sparks, *The Memories of Fifty Years*, p. 377.
67. Daniels, "The Acadians of Louisiana," 386.
68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid.*, p. 390.
70. Warner, "The Acadian Land," 94.

vary the toil of the plantation with the pleasures of fishing and lazy navigation. But to the women and the home-stayers this was evidently an event. The men had been to the outer world, and brought back with them the gossip of the bayous and the simple incidents of the camping life on the coast. (71)

Daniels—true to form—was more critical of Acadian men and their work routines, but he tended to restrict his broad generalizations to particular regions. For example, in his description of the Atchafalaya region the author characterized the men as living “almost exclusively on fish and waterfowl, cultivating generally nothing more than a scant supply of corn and rice for home use.” In the Lafourche district, the menfolk were said to live in much the same way, but supplemented their meager income by hunting duck and venison for markets in New Orleans and surrounding towns. He also told of the simpler hunters and fishermen of the intervening backswamp, whose time was “about equally divided between fishing, eating, sleeping and shaking with ague [malaria].” (72) Daniels also volunteered some general statistics (of dubious accuracy) on the physical state of the male population of Gros Chevreuil (present-day Leonville, St. Landry Parish):

In organization, the genuine Acadian of Gros Chevreuil is inferior to his American compatriot. His average height is below the medium, and though generally well-proportioned, he cannot be pronounced muscular; nor yet can he boast that vitality which sometimes proves an equivalent for

physical vigor. He is generally lean in person, with a decided tendency to desiccation, that often leads to the remark, ‘Cajuns do not die like other people; they dry up and blow away.’ (73)

Daniels maintained that the “Cajuns” of the prairie were “far superior in size, vigor and activity” to counterparts in the adjacent bluff country and floodplain. (74) The author was not the first to observe the distinctive machismo of the prairie cowboy—often a colorful blend of Acadian and Spanish Creole whose modern-day descendants still gallop across the rolling hinterlands of Church Point and Mamou:

The finest specimens of Acadian physique are to be found among the herdsmen of the Attakapas prairies. Superb riders, generally tall and well formed, with the black hair and large black eyes of their race, they are certainly fine-looking fellows. Some of them have developed into first-class cattle thieves, and in a few instances they have gone a degree beyond cattle stealing. However, one must admit that no people have furnished fewer criminals than the Acadians of interior Louisiana, who live out their simple lives without knowing the outside world or being known by it.... (75)

Taylor also expressed his admiration for the Acadian cattleman. His highly romanticized portrait of these ranchers evokes a serene image of halcyon days gone by:

71. *Ibid.*, 95.

72. Daniels, “The Acadians of Louisiana,” 391.

73. *Ibid.*

74. *Ibid.*, 392.

75. *Ibid.*

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Attakapas Horseman

...Mounted on his pony, with lariat in hand, he herded his cattle, or shot and fished; but so gentle was his nature, that lariat and rifle seemed transformed into pipe and crook of shepherd. Light wines from the Medoc, native oranges, and home-made sweet cakes filled his largest conceptions of feasts; and violin and clarionet made high carnival in his heart. (76)

In a general comment, Daniels further emphasized the civility of the region. Greed, as well as the fruits of greed, did not place the perpetrator in a high position of esteem:

...The one who profits by his neighbor's extremity gains no social advancement with his ill-gotten wealth. They are not jealous, vindictive, nor greedy of wealth, and crime is almost unknown among them. Except for some poor fellow smuggling off a head or more of cattle, when the driver makes his annual tour to buy up surplus stock for the New Orleans market, and for the brawls at the polls or at the places of amusement, the occupation of justice of the peace would soon be gone. (77)

The unfenced prairie of the nineteenth century was among the most distinctive natural regions in the South. With rare exception, the special aura produced by its billowing surface and seemingly endless expanse is now gone. The numerous towns and hamlets which presently dot the prairie, along with the regular clusters of farmsteads penned in by a checkerboard

township survey system imported from the alien Midwest, have diminished the old grandeur of the Attakapas and Opelousas country forever. One of the best descriptions of yesteryear was supplied by the visiting Colonel Lockett, whose great depth of experience and "no nonsense" disposition were nevertheless overcome by the broad panorama which stretched before him. Speaking very little French, Lockett trotted his horse west from the town of Opelousas on a hot summer day in 1870. His hazy destination was Joe Chaumont's ferry on Bayou Nez Piqué:

...The next morning at 7 A.M. I set out for a trip across the great Prairie region. The open plains I had already traversed along the Teche and between Vermilionville and Opelousas were as little lakes to the great ocean-like expanses before me. Mr. [Charles] Thompson rode with me a dozen miles to put me on the right road, or rather trail, across the Prairies. After being left to my own guidance, I felt a good deal like a mariner on an unknown sea. But I had my compass along and knew the direction I had to take, so I determined to keep my bearings and religiously take that of the two roads which held nearest to the course I wished to pursue.

I made Mr. David Courville's by dinner time and was much pleased to find I had followed the path marked out for me. Thence my route was to be through the great Prairie Mamou to Chaumont's, as every one in the Prairie country knew his ferry and all the roads leading to it. This I did at several houses that I passed at long intervals on the Prairie, by asking, 'Is this the road to Joe Chaumont's?'



Storm on the Prairie

'*Oui, oui, oui, c'est bon chemin,*' was the invariable reply. At first I answered, 'Oh yes, I see the road is good, all the roads are good, but I want to know if this is the *right* road to Joe Chaumont's Ferry.'

'*Oui, oui, oui, Monsieur, c'est bon chemin.*' At last I worked it out. That *bon* was an unknown quantity to me in the Creoles' expression, so I considered it as X, and after a process of mental combination, transposition, reduction, and elimination, I finally concluded that it meant *right* when applied to a road, and then I went on my way rejoicing....

About an hour after I left Mr. Courville's, when in the very midst of the broad prairie, with not a tree or a house in sight, a dense, black, angry-looking cloud began to rise on the northwestern horizon. It came up with tremendous rapidity, and soon a fearful storm of wind and rain came sweeping across the open plain towards me. To run from it would most certainly have been idle and fruitless, so I engaged myself by watching the swift approach of the storm and admiring the grandeur of

the scene. Not long did I have to watch and wait. In a few moments more it was upon me in all its fury. I tried the efficacy of my umbrella for about two seconds and was then very glad to get it safely furled.

It was the twenty-fifth day of July, and had there been a thermometer on the Prairie, previous to the storm, the mercury would have been in all probability making desperate efforts to get out of the tube at the hermetically sealed end; on the contrary, the wind and rain of the storm were cold and penetrating, and I had to ride through it for the rest of the day. The Prairies became a vast sheet of water and made the *bon chemin* all the more difficult to find. But by frequently consulting my trusty compass I kept on my course, and finally reached M. Joe Chaumont's just about dark, having made a day's journey of thirty-two miles.

...Early on the following morning mine host roused me from my slumbers. I felt sore and stiff, and found I had a very bad cold. But M. Chaumont said I wasn't half as bad off as my horse.... (78)

LIST OF PERSONS SUBJECT TO TAXATION IN THE
PARISH OF ST. MARY IN THE
YEAR 1813

With the number of Slaves
in the Said Parish^{*}

Compiled by Glenn R. Conrad

BELLE ISLE		BAYOU TECHE (cont.)	
Walter Brashear		Mrs. Antoine Etier	
		Mrs. W. Desk	7
BERWICK'S BAY		M. Constance Etier	4
Samuel R. Rice	10	William Addison	2
Luke Brien	2	Heirs of S. Nixon	
Christopher Brien	3	Henry Harkrider	
Henry Johnson		William Prater	
Wm. Rochel	20	Thomas Insall	
Hays		Heirs of Norton	
Joseph Berwick	4	John Fowles	82
Peter H. Rentrop	8	Peter Dalton	1
Henry Knight	2	Dubucley	
John Homer		Alexander Lewis	
William Knight	1	Loyd Wilcoxon	6
ATCHAFALAYA		Heirs of Darby	
John Hacket		Basil Crow	7
William Brent		Jos. & Bal. Senet	
William Moore		Joseph Senet	5
John Lackman		BAYOU SALE	
Fredrick Rentropes		Rufus Nickleson	3
Philip Boutie		Balthazar Senet	4
Peter Sauva		Joshua Garret	6
Jacob Miller		P. & W. Roberts	6
Jacob Noper	1	Peter Roberts	18
Heirs of Hays		T. & J. Ferguson	
John Noper		Warren Buford	6
John Meriman	5	James Buford	8
John B. Bertrand		Nathan Kemper	5
Louis Kerlegas		Farquard Campbell	2
Peter Hartman		Kemper & Johnson	
William Moore		Peter Verdine	4
Mrs. Jarett		Daniel S. Norton	
William Cockran		Verdine brothers	
John Hudson	8	John B. Verdine	6
John N. Kershaw		Alexander Verdine	5
BAYOU TECHE		Peter Orilli	
William Biggs	2	Baker & St. Jones	
Hiram Allen		John N. Kershaw	
Michael Knight		Henry Harkrider	
Robert Stacy	3	Joseph Irwin	
		Heirs of Bandick	

^{*}From The (Franklin) Planters' Banner, April 6, 1848. The spelling of names are as they appear in the newspaper.

BAYOU SALE (cont.)

John Rieves	5
Archibald Smith	8
Michael Gordy	4
Capt. Sutherland	
Heirs of John Orille	
Peter Robinet	4

BAYOU TECHE

Cadet Molon	
Francis Hudson	10
John Armstrong	5
Richard Skinner	4
Ebenezer Snow	2
Samuel E. Scott	4
Heirs of Honr. Senet	
Eugene Sennet	8
Thos. Wagaman	9
George Royster	8
Richard Savin	
Louis Demaret	26
Martin Demaret	1
John Moore	2
Joseph Guedry	
Mrs. M. Guedry	
Stephen Barabin	4
Winfrey Lockett	13
Lockett & Foster	
Levi Foster	3
Alexis Carlin	12
Danis Carlin	10
Honore Carlin	25
Celestin Carlin	11
Mrs. Carlin	2
Mrs. Cadet Etier	1
Evan Bowles	13
Eugene Carlin	7
H. & L. Sterling	58
Mumford Perrvman	1
Dr. Jas. Morris	
Isaac Reed	
Barnel Hulick	
Jos. Charpentier	1
John Leese	
William Duley	
Abraham Armstrong	
Matthew Nimmo	6
Jehu Wilkinson	6
James Sanders	7

BAYOU YOCKLY

Walter Brashear	8
-----------------	---

COTE BLANCHE

John Gravier	
Louis Demaret	
Louis Chassery	
Jett Thomas	37

BAYOU TECHE

Lucius Smith	
Jesse Smith	5
Louis Legnon	3
James John	7
William Sanders	
Frederick Pellerin	
Francis Guedry	1
Louis Delahoussaye	
Alexander Porter	
Francis Boutte	
William Richardson	3
William A. Smith	45
Joshua Baker	32
Heirs of Sterling	67
Thomas Martin	9
Jackson & Caffery	35
H. Theall	4
Jos. L. Sumner	17
Miss T. Drake	5
Ecum Sumner	
Duke W. Sumner	13
Martin L. Haynie	14
Jessie E. Lacy	14
Heirs of Pellerin	
Lyman Harding	57
Heirs of Delahoussaye	
Peter Rugnier	12
Joseph Provost	4
James Hennen	18
John Ditch	
John Bossier	7
Alex. Pellerin	1
Agricole Fuselier	
Cam A. Freeman	
Contamin Sorrel	13
John Labarthe	4
Francis Dumisnil	
Regobert Verret	
John B. Verret	1
Andrew Hartman	1
Nicholas Verret	3
Francis Simiker	
Valery Martin	1
Marcelin Verret	2
Hycinthe Bernard	

BAYOU TECHE (cont.)

Mary Joseph	2
John Dartes	1
Francis Dubois	
Benjamin Winchester	
Frederick Pellerin	23
Alexandre Frere	27
Charles Oger	11
Joseph Sorrel	72
Mrs. Segur	2
Felicite Segur	3
Louis Pecot	2
Eugene Carlin	
Francis Provost	18
Pierre Etier	5
Nicholas Provost	50
Eugene Borel	4
Godfrey Provost	5
Lufroy Provost	8
Hubert Pellerin	7
Mrs. Monier	6
Nicholas Loisel	3
Mrs. J. L. Hebert	
Mrs. Milhomme	4
Mrs. M. Hebert	
John B. Bourgeois	7
Capt. Sutherland	
Benjamin Scurlock	17
Joseph Chishom	3
George Singleton	2
Joseph Martin	
Mrs. Borel	6
Mrs. Thruston	38
Mrs. Louis Moore	1
James Andrus	
Heirs of S. Andrus	

BAYOU TECHE (cont.)

James L. Johnson	1
Nicholas Hebert	18
Maxim Descuirs	
Claude Frillo	9
Rosette Boutte	
Mulo Boutte	2
Jeannette Boutte	1
Pierre Boutte	
Philip Boutte	1
Leon Boutte	3
Charles Olivier	
Madelaine Lacoste	1
Adelaide Dubrueil	2
Louis Deblanc	22
Zenon Boutte	6
Julien Duval	
Ambrose Duval	1
Mrs. Martel	1
Antoine Boutte	3

BACK LANDS

Philebert Boutte	
L. P. Delahoussaye	
Charles Meyer	2
Achille Berard	3
Francis C. Boutte	23
Frederick Pellerin	4
Jesse McCall	17
R. Broussard	2
Eloi Broussard	
Edw. Broussard	
Dosite Broussard	
Alexr. Lanclos	2
Pierre Leblanc	
Agricole Leblanc	

LOUISIANA'S FIRST ACADIAN RELIGIOUS

By James F. Geraghty

Quite fittingly for the purposes of his epic poem, Longfellow cast the aging, exiled Evangeline in the role of a Sister of Mercy, nursing the sick and wounded, comforting the bereaved, and engaged in other humanitarian works during the twilight of her long and frustrating search for Gabriel. This, of course, added to the romanticism of her character and lent a divine justification to her life. Without doubt, no Acadian religious served as Longfellow's exemplar, although Evangeline's religious counterparts did exist.

Some months ago, the thought occurred that even if the Ursuline nuns of New Orleans had not established any convents in the bayou country of Southwest Louisiana, their influence might have been felt in settlements as distant as *Poste des Attakapas* (present-day St. Martinville) and *Poste des Opelousas*. The author subsequently inquired as to whether or not the Ursuline archives contained the names of any girls from these outposts received in the convent as boarding students. The Ursuline archivist's immediate response was negative. The only "lists" of the colonial period were incorporated into such account books which had escaped the catastrophic fires and floods so destructive in New Orleans' past. These ledger books, however, seldom included the students' place of origin.

After a lapse of several months, the author received a more complete reply, again not answering the immediate question, but providing an interesting and thought-provoking insight into the Acadian exiles' initial contact with the world of New Orleans:

Ursuline Academy
2635 State Street
New Orleans, La.
May 29, 1977

...I have found one reference to the Acadian girls in a secondary source. Father Charles Bour-nigalle was chaplain of the Ursulines from March 10, 1890 until his death (on) January 31, 1894. He had access to all the early extant records of the Ursulines, and he was assisted in his work by one or more Sisters. He left a typed unbound manuscript called *Annales des Ursulines de la Nouvelle-Orleans*. It ends with the Spanish colonial period. In volume II, chapter 2, he devotes some pages to the Acadians. There is one brief paragraph that refers to the Ursulines.

Dans cette circonstance les Ursulines furent comme toujours à la hauteur de la situation; quoique bien pauvres à cette époque, elles cédèrent tout l'emplacement dont elles pouvaient disposer, et allongèrent leurs tables pour donner place à un grand nombre d'orphelines acadiennes. p. 22

I was more successful with the Sisters. Notes on the latter have been taken from a large manuscript volume, *Registre pour*

écrire les réceptions des Rses. de France et postulantes [Mar. 4, 1726-Sept. 20, 1893] *et les lettres circulaires* (July 6, 1728-Jan. 31, 1894). Receptions and professions are recorded in the first half of the book and the circular letters (really obituary accounts) which were sent to the houses in Europe are copied in the second part.

Rose LeBlanc

Excerpt from page 17:

Rose LeBlanc was the legitimate daughter of René LeBlanc of Grand Pré, native of Acadia in Canada and of Anne Terriot; was baptized in the parish of the said place; 29 years old; widow of Raphael Broussard, resident of Précou Riat in Canada. She had been at the convent some months and all the religious agreed, at a meeting held [on] August 14, 1765, that she should be admitted to the novitiate in view of her good will, her gently disposition and kindness to all. She was received as a coadjutrix Sister, March 31, 1766 and received the religious habit [on] April 29, 1766 before the beginning of the very hot weather. Reverend Père Antoine, Spanish Capuchin, officiated at the ceremony.

Excerpt from page 20:

She was given the name Sister Ste. Monique and made her vows in the presence of Father Dagobert, Capuchin, April 30, 1768.

Excerpt from [a] circular letter [on] page 232:

Sister Ste. Monique LeBlanc died [on] February 6, 1773 at the age of 38 years, 6 months. She had come from Acadia with all her family. "We have received her

and she has edified us very much during the short time she was with us."

As soon as she learned that there was a religious community in New Orleans she asked to be received. She was a very useful member of the community, skillful in all things, of a gay disposition, fervent and exact in all her duties, rendering prompt service to all alike.

She was so grateful for her vocation that she said she could never thank God enough for the great favor of her religious vocation.

She died of smallpox.

Marguerite Bourg

Excerpt from page 18:

Legitimate daughter of Joseph Bourg and Marie Landry, resident of the parish of St. Charles of Grand Pré des Mines in Acadia, Bishopric of Québec in Canada; about 19 years of age. She was received unanimously as a coadjutrix sister. She had passed more than a year at the Ursuline boarding school in New Orleans. She received the religious habit [on] October 28, 1767. Father Prosper, Capuchin and chaplain of the Ursulines, presided. She received the name Sr. Ste. Claire. In April 1768, the community decided that she did not have the qualities required for the religious life and she returned to her family.

Anne Gertrude Braud

Excerpt from page 21:

Legitimate daughter of Charles Braud and Claire Trahan; native of Pigidie and baptised in the parish of the Assumption of the same place in Acadia, bishopric of Canada; about 23 years of age; arrived here with her family and

desired to consecrate herself to God in the Ursuline Convent; asked to be received at the novitiate. [On] March 24, 1768 the community consented that she test her vocation as a coadjutrix sister. [On] April 30, 1770, she received the religious habit as a coadjutrix sister. Father Dagobert presided. She received the name Sr. Marie Joseph.

Excerpt from page 23:

She made her religious profession [on] April 30, 1772.

Excerpt from page 247:

Sister Marie Joseph died in 1818. The month and day are not given.

This dear Sister presented herself at the parlor with one of her sisters to ask to become a coadjutrix sister. She was admitted to the house and after sufficient trial she was received at the novitiate. She made her religious profession with great fervor, a state which she retained all her life. Sister served the community in every way she could. She had great charity seeking to be of service to everyone. She died at the age of 72, having passed 47 in religion.

Elizabeth Bro

(Sister of Gertrude Braud mentioned above.)

On page 21 there is a very short entry: August 6, 1768, Elizabeth Bro [sic], sister of Gertrude, asked

to be received at the novitiate and was accepted. Her health became always worse and she died [on] May 12, 1771 after having received the last sacraments. She has been buried in our cemetery.

Note: I find the case of this Sister very puzzling. In every other case where a novice was found not to have the health necessary to function as an Ursuline, she was returned to her family. I wonder what was so exceptional about this Sister that they kept her at the novitiate for nearly three years even though her health was becoming steadily worse.

I am sorry we do not have more to offer you about these Acadian girls.

Sincerely yours,
Sister Jane Frances Heaney,
O.S.U., Archivist

We can be grateful for Sister Jane Frances' diligent search. Besides revealing the existence of some interesting persons, the letter cited above provides a small idea of the wealth of information in this 250-year-old educational institution, the United States' oldest convent-school. By the same token, the LeBlancs, the Theriots, the Broussards, the Breauxs, the Landrys, the Trahans, the Bourgs and others in the Acadian Litany of Saints (and sinners) can take great pride that of their name and lineage came Louisiana's first Acadian religious.

THE ACADIAN FAMILY: ANACHRONISM OR PARADIGM?

By Sarah Brabant

The tenacity with which the Acadian culture has withstood the ravages of potentially destructive forces, such as their cruel expulsion from Nova Scotia in 1755, the years of wandering with the attendant poverty and misery, the final settlement in Louisiana with its capricious climate in the mid-1760s, and finally, the continuous encroachment of other cultures, has been noted by numerous writers. (1) For example, T. Lynn Smith and Vernon J. Parenton suggest the following factors as primarily responsible for the Acadian culture's resistance to change.

(1) the intermarriage of the Acadian and the French maidens with the males who constituted the bulk of the newcomers; (2) the dominance of the Acadian mother in all matters pertaining to the child...; (3) the tremendous influence and control of the French Catholic priest over his parishioners; ... (4) the *esprit de corps* of the French-speaking people

which engendered imitation...and (5) the way of life of these people.... (2)

A close examination of these factors suggests the Acadian family was the ultimate bulwark in this remarkably resilient culture.

H. W. Gilmore indicates that an additional factor, the social isolation of the Acadians, was also of major importance in the preservation of the unique culture, an isolation prompted by language differences, self-sufficiency, and lack of mobility. (3) In essence, then, the very uniqueness of the culture itself served to protect it from "Americanization" in the early 1900s. Gilmore warned, however, that the assimilation of the Acadians into the mainstream of American life could not be thwarted much longer and proposed that the Acadian culture be studied adequately before it was too late.

Gilmore's prediction should have been realized, for today, Interstate 10 intersects the heart of Acadiana, and the center of

1. This point is best exemplified in T. Lynn Smith and Vernon J. Parenton's "Acculturation Among the Louisiana French," *The American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV (November, 1938), 355-384.

For an excellent account of this period of Acadian history, see Jacqueline Voorhies' "In Search of the Promised Land," *The Cajuns: Essays on Their History and Culture* (Lafayette, La., 1978), pp. 97-114.

2. Smith and Parenton, "Acculturation," 384.

3. H. W. Gilmore, "Social Isolation of the French Speaking People of Rural Louisiana," *Social Forces*, XII (October, 1933), 78-84.

French Louisiana, Lafayette, is internationally recognized as the capital of the offshore oil industry. Certainly, at first glance, the process of assimilation appears to have taken place, at least with respect to Lafayette. Moss still hangs from the giant oak trees that shade the city from the Southern sun; the winding bayou still makes its way through the town, but the Lafayette of yesterday appears to have vanished. Today, with a population of approximately 70,000, (4) the city, with its medical complex, municipal auditorium, convention facilities, municipal airport, and the Pelican State's second largest state university, the University of Southwestern Louisiana, serves as the economic and cultural center of French Louisiana. Symbols of Americana, such as Sears, Penneys, McDonalds, Burger King and Burger Chef, offer their standardized wares throughout the city. The Americanization of Acadians appears a *fait accompli*.

This writer, however, argues that a death knell for the Acadian culture may be premature. As a newcomer to Southern Louisiana four years ago, I was impressed immediately with the area's "old world" flavor. As I settled into my new environs, I could not help but notice a "differentness" in those whom I encountered. This "differentness" extended beyond the French I heard as I conducted my business in banks or courthouses, or waited my turn in stores. It manifested itself in the way in which adults interacted with children and with each other. Children, as well as adults, are treated in a positive, rather than a negative, manner. For example, the cross child in the grocery store is treated as one who is tired and therefore in need of rest, rather than as one who is being obnoxious and in the way. The needs of small children are respected, not pushed aside.

As I came to know my students whom I met in my capacity as a teacher at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, both outside the classroom and through their comments and questions in class, I began to perceive a cultural tradition that has survived the post World War II era. Basic to this culture is a family structure which produces individuals who, though they are occasionally incredibly naive regarding life outside Acadiana, are also imbued with a vitality and enthusiasm that is refreshing to those more familiar with other climes. The longer I remained in Acadiana, the more interested I became in the culture of the Acadian people. I wanted to learn more about the structure of their families, the network of relationships within which the Acadian personality develops. As the strength of these people was increasingly revealed to me, I wanted to know more of their origin.

The present paper describes the Acadian family of yesterday as reflected in poetry, stories, letters and remembrances. Data are then presented that characterize families found in Lafayette today. A comparison of these two data sources reveals far more similarity than should be expected if complete assimilation has occurred.

The history of the Acadians is intricately interwoven with the development of the Acadian family. Indeed, the early Acadian society was "family." Felix Voorhies, recalling the stories his grandmother told concerning life in *Acadie* prior to *Le Grand Derangement*, cites her statement that "Our manner of living in Acadia was peculiar, the people forming as it were, one single family." (5) According to Voorhies' grandmother, all were expected to work; idleness was not permitted. A child began to work as soon as he or she was able and continued to do so until incapacitated by

4. The official 1970 Census reported 68,908. U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. General Population Characteristics: 1970, Louisiana.

5. Felix Voorhies, *Acadian Reminiscences* (Opelousas, La., 1907), p. 27.

age. The division of labor was traditional: men and boys tended the flocks and plowed the fields; women and girls spun wool and cotton which they then wove into cloth. The old people braided straw and fashioned hats. Early marriages were encouraged and parents did not interfere with the choices made by their children.

The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 deeded Acadia to the English, and the expulsion of the Acadians followed in 1755. Families were torn apart; husbands were separated from wives; children parents. Harnett T. Kane remarks, however, that despite the disintegration of the basic structure of their existence, the people themselves longed for an opportunity to recreate life as it once was. (6) South Louisiana offered them this opportunity. Kane writes:

The bayou became their place, their ways fitting to it and changing with it through the years. The product is a culture without parallel in the United States--a curious, untypically American design that is warm and rich in values, fitting no mold but its own. (7)

A more ideal setting for the restoration of a culture could not be imagined. Kane adds:

The world heard little and saw nothing of the Acadian and his bayous. He remained in the back country, developing his own habits, his own economy, his likes and dislikes. (8)

Hidden from the world, the Acadian people reestablished the culture they had known in Acadia. Their heritage served them well, for they labored and thrived.

Central to this heritage was the strong sanction against idleness. Kane notes that all who were able worked; the men and boys in the fields, the women and girls in the houses and yards. Among the trappers, the men trapped while the women skinned the fruit of their husbands' labors. The elders were the law within the family. Disputes between families were settled by the local Catholic priest. Marriage came early in life and skill in weaving or wheel making were evidence of readiness for that social institution. (9)

Kane characterizes the system as patriarchal. This is an unfortunate use of the term, however, for it conveys to the reader a dominant-subordinate relationship between men and women that does not appear to have been the case. Kane remarks that the Acadian people helped each other through necessity and tradition. (10) This probably refers to the mutual assistance between families. It could, however, just as well refer to the synergic relationship that apparently existed between husband and wife, for the maintenance of stereotypical sex-roles was apparently far less important to the Acadians than accomplishing the task of the moment. For example, Kane notes that among the fishing folk, both women and children worked the family gardens, while the men were away; (11) in the prairie economy, the women worked in the fields beside their husbands. (12)

If *Maman's* life was not confined to the home, neither was *Papa's* restricted to the

6. Harnett T. Kane, *The Bayous of Louisiana* (New York, 1943), pp. 10-11.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*, p. 148.

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 284.

fields or waters for the men cooperated with the women in the traditional household tasks. One of these tasks was cooking. Kane reports that men mixed dough for bread, shaped it, and baked it in outdoor ovens. (13) Kane also notes that both men and women "excelled in cookery magic." (14) In addition, both men and women shared in the care of children. And this was no small undertaking, for the Acadian ideal was to have as many children as possible. (15) All writers agree that as they worked together, there was joy and laughter for the good that each day brought. The classical view of the Acadian family characterizes a people far more concerned with *la joie de vivre* than with who does what.

More important than the sharing of household tasks, however, was the Acadian woman's place in the economic sphere. Women purchased goods from the *marchand-charrette* who sold his wares along the bayous, (16) but the Acadian women's role in the extradomestic world was not limited to her role as purchasing agent. Indeed, the prairie wife often provided the only source of cash income through the sale of eggs. (17) In personal conversations, several Acadians told me that their aunts and grandmothers also sold butter. Ramsey reports, "Truck gardens flourish on the ancient levees and many an Acadian wife makes her money from produce sold from these short rows of vegetable crops." (18) In my personal conversations with people, I was reminded that the women not only made money, but they decided how it was to be spent. This is further substantiated by Lauren C. Post's statement

that "The Acadian housewife had some very definite rights in matters pertaining to work, [and] spending money" (19)

The above comments hardly reflect a family hierarchy with Papa as the ultimate authority and Maman as an obedient and quiescent servant, for the Acadian family appears to have been too vibrant for the rigidity associated with patriarchy to have transpired. Men and women were concerned with each other and the world that surrounded them. It may be true that the Acadians' world was restricted to the bayou country, but within the sphere they occupied, each incident generated lively interest from all. Further evidence of this vitality and interest in life, especially with respect to the Acadian woman, is manifested in the *tablette*, an interesting feature in many rural Acadian homes. This was a small wooden shelf which rested just outside and flush with the kitchen window and permitted its owner to wash dishes while simultaneously enabling her to enter into the life on the road near the house. (20) The Acadian woman was definitely not confined to the inner world of the home. (21)

It was mentioned earlier that the Acadians' love of life, or *joie de vivre*, was a factor in the emergence of a culture in which sex roles appear to have been far less restrictive than in other parts of the United States. Another factor in the development of this unique culture was the role played by Catholic priests. Kane writes, "As a last resort in arguments between families, they called in that other père, the priest, who

13. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

14. Carolyn Ramsey, *Cajuns on the Bayous* (New York, 1957), p. 86.

15. Kane, *The Bayous of Louisiana*, p. 172.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 284.

18. Ramsey, *Cajuns on the Bayous*, p. 104.

19. Lauren C. Post, *Cajun Sketches* (Baton Rouge, 1962), p. 117.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

21. The present paper focuses primarily on the role of the Acadian woman in the economic sphere. For an excellent description of the educational opportunities afforded women, see Delores Egger Labbe, "Women's Education in Early Nineteenth-Century Louisiana," *Louisiana Review*, IV (Winter, 1975), 37-47.

knew all things." (22) He further remarks, "The influence of 'Father' extends to many things; he is considered before most enterprises are undertaken; his opinion is sought by those who are uncertain, or certain, of their proposals." (23) It is plausible that the priest's role as confidant, arbiter and advisor permitted both men and women a greater freedom to develop their own unique talents rather than be molded in a culturally defined stereotype.

The traditional Acadian family as reflected in the pages of literature and in reminiscences is one in which all members entered into and shared the day-to-day existence with all the accompanying joys and sorrows. The strong sanction against idleness certainly contributed to this. But the role of the priest is also important, for the priest represented the umbrella that sheltered the Acadians, the Catholic Church. Guided by the Catholic Church in all matters of ultimate importance, the Acadians were free to pursue penultimate or worldly considerations with a degree of freedom not permitted their fellow Americans in a predominantly Protestant milieu who must anxiously concern themselves with all of life's issues. In other words, the very presence of a monolithic superstructure provided a context within which individual freedoms could be pursued. It was a structure within which the Acadian family existed, then, which served to both promote and preserve its novel form.

The question remains, however, as to whether or not the traditional Acadian family has survived the rapid encroachment of the outside world. In order to more clearly understand Acadian family life as it exists in Lafayette today, the Family Life

Apostolate, Diocese of Lafayette, conducted 305 in-depth interviews between the summers of 1974 and 1976. (24) The purpose of the study was to define both structural and relational differences in order to enable counselors to conduct more relevant marriage preparation courses and to better assist existing troubled families. Although no attempt was made to determine if traditional Acadian family life persisted, the data shed some light on the questions central to this article.

In order to ensure representation across lines of age, sex, race and income, respondents were randomly selected from lists obtained from churches and schools. Of the total number of respondents, 114 were men and 191 were women. Seventy were black and 234 were white. Age ranged from twenty to eighty-six, the modal age being between thirty and thirty-nine. The overwhelming majority of respondents—eighty-two percent—were married. As would be expected, 284—93 percent—were Catholic; 76 percent attended mass at least once a week. Education ranged from none to graduate work, with the mode being between ten and twelve years. Income varied from under \$1,000 to over \$25,000. As a whole, however, income was high, for 46 percent reported incomes of \$12,000 or more. With respect to origin, 189, or 62 percent, referred to themselves as Acadians. An additional twenty-two, or seven percent, claimed some French background.

Values and attitudes were tapped by asking the respondents to complete open-ended stories. A brief description of selected stories and the findings follows.

Gerard and Suzanne have been

22. Kana, *The Bayous of Louisiana*, p. 148.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

24. The study was designed and the data collected under the direction of the author and Dr. Patricia Harris, Assistant and Associate Professors of Sociology respectively at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. The sponsor for the study was the Family Life Apostolate, Diocese of Lafayette, whose diocesan coordinator is Rev. James Broussard.

married twenty years. Their house is in bad need of repair; two of their children are college age; both of their mothers need operations. There is money to do only one at a time. What order?

The mothers' operations were of paramount importance, followed by college, with house repair the least important. The needs of older members of the family appear to outweigh educational needs of children and greatly surpass material considerations.

Jim and Anne have been married ten years and are having marital problems. Anne wants them to talk to a priest about their problems, but Jim is very opposed to the idea. What should Anne do?

A majority—sixty-five percent—felt that Anne should go to the priest alone. Women (sixty-nine percent) were more likely than men (fifty-seven percent) to take this position, but thirty-seven percent of the men offered an alternative, such as the priest coming to the house or the couple talking it over. Less than seven percent of the men felt that Anne should do what Jim wants.

Mary and Bill were high school sweethearts and married at the age of eighteen. They have been married for five years. Mary worked as a clerk in a store while Bill attended college. Bill has since graduated and has a good job with a promising future. Life should be wonderful for this couple, but Bill has a nagging discontent. He and Mary seem to have so little in common. She feels his new friends from work are snobs; her friends bore him. What should Bill do?

Forty-nine percent felt that the young couple should work on the problem together; eighteen percent felt that Bill should change in some way. Twenty-eight percent felt that Mary should change. Fewer than six percent felt that divorce or separation was a solution to the problem.

Two of the stories were similar, for both dealt with the problem of work necessitating time away from spouse and children. One story, however, focused on the woman as employee, the other on the man.

1) Marie has been married to Albert seven years. They have two children, five and three. Marie works as a secretary for a business firm. She has a good chance to become an office manager, a much more responsible position, with greater future. It will mean, however, less time with Albert and the children. What should Marie do?

2) Paul and Blanche have been married eight years and they have two children, six and four. Paul works for a large company and has recently been offered a promotion. This promotion means more money and future, but it will necessitate extended periods of time away from Blanche and the children. What should Paul do?

Forty-one percent felt that the man was justified in advancing his career opportunities, despite the loss of time with family as opposed to only fourteen percent who felt that the woman should pursue a more favorable job opportunity if it meant less time at home. Given the fact that Lafayette women, even those with children under six years of age, are more likely to work outside the home than their coun-

terparts in either Louisiana or the United States (Lafayette, thirty-four percent; Louisiana, twenty-six percent; United States, twenty-five percent), (25) the number who felt that a woman should further her career regardless of family responsibilities was less than expected. On the other hand, given the American dream of success that supposedly permeates the American culture, the low rate of response for the man's commitment to career was also unexpected. The conclusion is that the disruption of the family by either man or woman is frowned upon in Lafayette.

Division of labor within the family was tapped by asking respondents who performed certain tasks or made particular decisions in their family. Some of the results of this aspect of the Lafayette study are comparable with findings in a similar study conducted in Memphis, Tennessee by Margaret Dicanio and Gordon Johnson. (26) Both studies found that certain tasks are sex-differentiated. For example, electrical repairing, plumbing, and minor carpentry were clearly male tasks in both Lafayette and Memphis; dusting, mopping floors, cooking, bedmaking, food shopping, and cleaning bathrooms were female chores. Washing diapers and caring for sick children were also female activities for both cities. A major difference between Lafayette and Memphis was seen in scheduling social events for the family. In Dicanio and Johnson's study, sixty-five percent of the respondents said this was performed by women. In the Lafayette study, only forty percent reported this done by women. Forty-eight percent said either did so in their home.

Dicanio and Johnson did not delineate types of cooking, but the Lafayette study suggests that cooking special dishes and mixing drinks are male prerogatives. With respect to the economic sphere, Lafayette women are more likely than men to pay bills and balance checkbooks. Both could be classified as inter-domestic activity. Of greater interest, both men and women decide how money should be spent, buy property, and secure loans. Women appear to have extra-domestic responsibility as well. Disciplining children and undertaking responsibility for their religious education are also tasks that either may perform.

A final note on the Lafayette study is the role of the priest. The continued importance of Catholic priests to the Acadian family is clearly revealed by the data. Respondents were given fifteen cards, each bearing a kinship or professional position. They were then asked to rank the cards in the order of whom they would turn to with a problem. For marital problems, only the spouse preceded the priest as the one to whom one would most likely turn. With respect to personal problems, the priest was outranked only by the spouse or mother for most respondents. Doctors outranked lawyers as potential extra-domestic advisors, but both ranked far below the priest.

The data are not conclusive. Nevertheless, general statements may be made. The family *per se* is important to the Acadian. Career aspirations for men and women are seen as unimportant when they conflict with family relationships. Responsibility to the elder members of the family is regarded as important, even more

25. Percentages were calculated for married women, husband present, with children under six years of age. Data sources are as follows: "Lafayette Profile," prepared by the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce from Labor Force Characteristics of the Population, 1970; U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "General Social and Economic Characteristics," 1970, Louisiana; U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Detailed Characteristics, United States Summary, 1970.

26. Margaret Dicanio and Gordon Johnson, "The Sex Assumption in Task Allocation," (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwestern Sociological Association, Dallas, Texas, March 1974).

so than providing for the future of the young. Many of the traditional tasks are sex-differentiated, but both child care and economic determination tend to cross over sex categories. An argument could be presented, of course, that sharing child care and economic determination by both men and women are the result of the women's movement of the 1960s and, thus, signs of assimilation. On the other hand, when compared with the family reflected in the literature of Acadiana, one may more convincingly argue that this flexibility in roles is a vestige of the traditional Acadian family. Finally, at least for Catholic Acadians, the priest continues to be an important confidant and advisor.

Carolyn Ramsey writes:

...there is a timeless quality in Louisiana's bayou country. In spite of the outlanders' booming industrialism, life in the Cajun country moves much in the same old rhythm. (27)

This implies a past untouched by time and suggests the Acadian culture is but an anachronism that lives on oblivious to the challenge of new stimuli. Inherent is the inference that even a culture hidden in the swamps of South Louisiana will eventually be overwhelmed. But is the Acadian culture as exemplified in the Acadian family an anachronism, a structure of the

past unsuited to modern times? Or is it perhaps a possible paradigm for the future?

The rapidity with which people in today's world are subjected to constant change resulting from technological advances, the obliteration of traditional boundaries with accompanying onslaught of dissimilar cultures and the capriciousness of life resulting from the impact of technology upon natural resources has been well documented. (28) Survival appears questionable, for the means to meet the challenge of rapid change are not immediately clear. The problems that beset the American people today, however, are not unlike those that confronted the early Acadians. The *joie de vivre* of the Acadians, their concern with the day's problems rather than with ultimate issues and the flexibility with which they met each challenge may well account for both the vitality and resiliency of the Acadian culture. Thus, this writer agrees that the Acadian culture should be studied, but not as a fossil of the past. Contrary to the inferences of Gilmore and others, the Acadian culture is not just an interesting phenomenon to be described. The Acadian culture served its people well. At the risk of appearing nostalgic, it is possible that the strengths of this culture could serve today. The Acadian culture may not be an anachronism of the past, but just possibly a design for facing the future.

MIKE SCANLAN: AN IRISH-AMERICAN IN ACADIA PARISH

By Gary Lavergne

During the mid-1920s, in a two-room school at Savoy (a rural Acadia Parish hamlet), Mrs. Francis Bertinot tested her fourth graders' historical knowledge by asking: "Who discovered America?" From the rear of the room a young boy replied: "Mike Scanlan!" (1) The child's answer was simply a manifestation of the respect which Scanlan, a leading Acadia Parish politician and businessman, enjoyed among his contemporaries.

Scanlan was the son of Michael Charles Scanlan, who left his native County Clare, Ireland for the United States in 1856. (2) The cause of the elder Scanlan's emigration is unknown, but it can probably be attributed to the economic dislocation produced by the famous Irish potato famine of the late 1840s. (3)

During the winter of 1856, Michael boarded at Liverpool the *Kossuth*, a passenger ship bound for New Orleans. While en route to the United States, he met, and subsequently fell in love with Mary Lynch, whom he married shortly after the

Kossuth's arrival at New Orleans on February 2, 1857. (4)

Michael Charles Scanlan and Mary Lynch resided at New Orleans for nine years; in 1866, however, the Scanlans moved to Opelousas and subsequently settled at Egan, where Michael Charles apparently worked as a farmhand. In the early 1870s, the Scanlans migrated to a 400-acre homestead near Pitreville, (5) where they cultivated Irish potatoes and rice, a crop pioneered in Southwest Louisiana by the Germans of the neighboring Fabacher community. (6)

Because of the great demand for labor on prairieland farms, yeomen farmers usually had large families; the Scanlans were no exception. Eight children were born to Michael Charles and Mary: Dennis, Margarite, John Phillip, Patrick, Mamie, Frank, Rosa Jane, and Michael William "Mike." (7)

Mike, the youngest of the Scanlan brood, was born at the family homestead on October 28, 1883. Five months later, he

1. Mrs. Francis Bertinot. Church Point, Louisiana. Interviewed by the author on March 25, 1978.

2. "Scanlan Family Tree," jointly prepared by the author and members of the Scanlan family. Information incorporated into the above-mentioned genealogy was derived primarily from the baptismal, marriage and death registers of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Church Point, Louisiana. Hereafter cited as "Scanlan Family Tree."

3. Mac Lysegh, *Irish Families* (New York, 1972), pp. 262-263; "Scanlan Family Tree," Ellis Arthur Davis, *A Historical Encyclopedia of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, n.d.), p. 709.

4. Records of the Port of New Orleans, Passenger List of the *Kossuth*, February 2, 1857. Microfilm copy on deposit at the Jefferson Caffery Louisiana Room, Dupre Library, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, Louisiana.

5. *The Story of Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1960), pp. 346-346; hereafter cited as *Story*, with page numbers. Davis, *Encyclopedia*, p. 709. The reader should note that in 1866, Acadia Parish was part of Imperial St. Landry Parish.

6. *Story*, pp. 346-346; unidentified newspaper clipping in the Rev. C. A. Bienvenue Papers, Sacred Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Church Point, Louisiana; hereafter cited as "Bienvenue Clippings."

7. "Scanlan Family Tree."

was baptized by Church Point's first resident Catholic priest, Rev. Augustus Eby; Theogene Daigle and Mary Wilson served as the infant's godparents. (8)

As a youth, Mike was energetic, restless and inquisitive. His childhood, however, was profoundly affected by his father's death in January 1892. Faced with the responsibility of assisting his mother in the management of the family farm, Scanlan was compelled to drop out of school. (9) This development dramatically influenced Mike's life, for, lacking a formal education, he had only one avenue for advancement—politics.

Scanlan entered the political arena in 1916, when he campaigned for, and subsequently won, a seat on the Acadia Parish Police Jury. (10) Mike's April 18 electoral victory marked the beginning of his forty-four-year career in the parish legislature which witnessed the farmer-politician's rise to a position of statewide prominence.

Mike Scanlan never took lightly his responsibilities on the police jury. This is clearly demonstrated by the hardships which he endured while travelling from his Pitreville home to Crowley, Acadia Parish's seat of government. For example, a typical journey involved an arduous trek over dusty or muddy roads to Eunice, a subsequent trainride to Mermentau, and, still later, a second jaunt by rail on the Mermentau-to-Crowley section of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The trip took well over twenty-four hours. (11)

This determination to serve his constituents was also reflected in Scanlan's

efforts to assist Acadia Parish farmers in maintaining the productivity of their lands. Of paramount importance to the parish's agricultural well-being was the improvement of the region's primitive drainage system. Acadia Parish is flat and thus easily flooded by persistent rainfall. The area's many small bayous and gullies are the only means of drainage; however, over the years, the capacity of these rivulets to drain the parish was greatly reduced by silt deposits. In addition, the meandering of the small bayous frequently hampered water flow. Finally, the problem was usually compounded by the small trees which bordered, and occasionally fell into, the region's innumerable gullies.

In order to alleviate the drainage problem, Scanlan proposed a resolution to the police jury, creating the Bayou Plaquemine and Wikoff Drainage District. On May 24, 1919, the parish legislature approved Mike's proposal and established a five-member board to supervise the clearing operations. Scanlan served on the board throughout his police jury career. (12)

Scanlan's persistent support of projects, such as the Bayou Plaquemine and Wikoff Drainage District, benefitting most of the parish expanded his base of popular support and resulted in his election as police jury president on June 12, 1928. (13) Mike, who was obviously pleased by the election, celebrated during the following week by giving an enormous barbecue, to which "old, new and present" members of the police jury, as well as numerous friends, were invited. The guests met "at the Mayer Hotel in Eunice at 10:30 a.m., and from

8. *Ibid.*; Baptismal Certificate for Michael William Scanlan, March 2, 1884; certified copy in the author's possession.

9. Story, pp. 346-348; Crowley Daily Signal, April 12, 1952; Church Point News, December 12, 1960.

10. Ward Three was noted for its skillful politicians. See Gary Lavergne, "Homer Barousse: Portrait of an Acadie Parish Politician," *Attakapas Gazette*, XI (Summer, 1976), 52-55.

11. M. W. Scanlan, Jr., Church Point, Louisiana. Interviewed by the author on April 17, 1976. Church Point News, December 13, 1960.

12. Minutes of the Acadia Parish Police Jury, September 12, 1916 session, Acadia Parish Police Jury Office, Acadia Parish Courthouse, Crowley, Louisiana; hereafter cited as Police Jury Minutes, with the date of the session.

13. Police Jury Minutes, June 12, 1928.

that place proceed[ed] to the barbecue grounds in the woods about three miles from Eunice across the line in Acadia Parish. Tables were filled with every imaginable delicacy." (14)

The people of Acadia Parish warmly accepted Scanlan as president of the police jury. Moreover, the press praised the parish legislature for selecting Mike as their executive officer. (15)

Thus generally recognized as a leading local politician, Scanlan became embroiled in Acadia Parish's political tug-of-war between pro-Long and anti-Long politicians during Huey Long's 1929 impeachment trial. Although a pro-Long politician, Scanlan was bombarded with requests by the Kingfish's opponents to pressure Acadia Parish's state senator, Homer Barousse (whose stand on the controversy was apparently in doubt) into opposing Long during the impeachment trial. (16)

Apparently because of the ineffectiveness of their local counterparts, several anti-Long spokesmen from Baton Rouge paid a call on Scanlan and attempted to convert him to their cause; however, once their identity became known, Mike ordered the men to depart immediately. (17)

The roots of Scanlan's loyalty to Long can be traced to the former's avid support of the latter's road building program. Through Mike's influence, the Acadia Parish Police Jury endorsed a state gasoline tax proposal as a means of encouraging the growth and improvement of the region's primitive road system. Shortly before the police jury's action, Long and O. K. Allen had assured Scanlan that the "Old Spanish

Trail" (present-day U. S. Highway 90) would be "one of the first, if not the first highway to be paved," (18) The Kingfish subsequently agreed to create an advisory board for the highway commission to supervise the awarding of state contracts. This "blue ribbon" panel consisted of seven elected state officials, a representative selected by the state's police juries, and eleven citizens appointed by the governor.

Mike Scanlan was appointed to the board because of his influence in the Louisiana Police Jury Association. During the association's 1930 convention, the state's police jurymen voted to support Huey Long's road-building program by a decisive majority. (19) The convention's decision was due in no small measure to Scanlan's campaigning on the program's behalf.

Although quite influential in the Louisiana Police Jury Association, Mike Scanlan did not hold an office in that organization until 1940, when he was elected first vice president and chairman of the association's powerful Resolutions Committee. (20) One year later, the president's illness compelled Mike to preside over the association's annual convention, and he supervised the conclave "to the satisfaction of everyone." Obviously pleased with his performance at the 1941 meeting, delegates to the 1942 Police Jury Association Convention elected Scanlan to fill the organization's highest office. (21)

Scanlan could not have been elected to the association's presidency at a more inopportune time, for he had to lobby the

14. Scanlan Family Scrapbook.

15. Local editorials applauded Scanlan's election as police jury president, stating that "Acadie's outlook for business administration [was] bright." *Ibid.*

16. Lavergnn, "Homer Barousse," 62-64; M. W. Scanlan, Jr.

17. M. W. Scanlan, Jr.

18. Scanlan Family Scrapbook.

19. T. Harry Williams, *Huey Long* (New York, 1969), pp. 445, 487.

20. "We Pay Homage to Our Founder and Our Past Presidents," *Louisiana Police Jury Review*, XI (April, 1947), 19.

21. L. F. Clewson, "Memories of the Monroe Meeting," *Louisiana Police Jury Review*, VI (April, 1942).

local government's interests before a state legislature torn by factional strife between the pro-and anti-Longites. Through astute diplomacy, however, he was able to secure state appropriations for parochial road improvements. (22)

The political factionalism within the state legislature was merely symptomatic of the political hostility that permeated all aspects of Louisiana's political life during the 1940s, including the Police Jury Association. These cleavages were never deeper than during the aftermath of the vicious 1944 gubernatorial election, when Scanlan issued an appeal for harmony among the Association's then feuding members. (23) His efforts, however, were only partially successful.

Factional politics were overshadowed by the exigencies of war. Like every American, Mike was much affected by American involvement in World War II. Under his leadership, the Acadia Parish Police Jury devoted many of their resources to the American war effort. Scanlan, however, was strongly opposed to the jury's largest, local, wartime project-maintenance of the Le Gros Memorial Airport.

Though the Le Gros airfield had no military importance, many Acadia Parish residents, victims of the war scare, insisted that the airport be handed over to the military. Scanlan strongly opposed such a move before the Acadia Parish Police Jury on the grounds that it was unnecessary.

Despite Mike's objections, the parish legislature, on April 14, 1942, adopted a resolution "constituting agreement with the United States, relative to the operation and maintenance of the Le Gros Memorial Airport." (24) The resolution further stated that the parish would operate and maintain the airport as an exclusively military field. the vocal proponents of the resolution, however, soon discovered that Scanlan's words were prophetic, and the parish lost money.

Following the war's conclusion, the Acadia Parish legislature, which had funneled a substantial portion of its revenues into such wartime projects as the maintenance of the Le Gros Airport, was faced with the problem of repairing public buildings which had been neglected during the wartime years. Of primary concern to the Acadia Parish Police Jury was the deterioration of the 1905 courthouse. In September 1948, Scanlan advocated that the parish legislature appropriate funds for the construction of a new court building. The police jury subsequently acted upon his recommendations, authorizing construction of a new structure at a cost of \$764,288. (25)

When not engaged in police jury politics, Scanlan's time and interest were devoted to his family and business affairs. On November 29, 1922, Michael Scanlan had married Lela Andrus, a twenty-five-year-old Maxie resident; two children-Michael William, Jr. and Carl Dean-were born of this union. (26)

As indicated above, Scanlan's home life

22. M. W. Scanlan, Jr.

23. The following is an excerpt of Scanlan's appeal for unity.

"We have just gone through a political campaign and the voters have elected parish and state officials for another four years. I would like to appeal to everyone attending and taking part in the discussions that we put aside our political differences and join together for a greater, more prosperous Louisiana."

"President Scanlan's Message to the Police Jury Association of Louisiana," *Louisiana Police Jury Review*, VIII (April, 1944), 3.

24. *Police Jury Minutes*, April 14, 1942.

25. *The New Orleans Times-Picayune*, September 14, 1948; Carl A. Bressaux, Glenn R. Conrad, R. Warren Robison, *The Courthouses of Louisiana* (Lafayette, La., 1977), pp. 29-31.

26. Lela Andrus, a native of Maxie, Louisiana, was the daughter of Jussia Andrus and Jane Young. Born on June 12, 1897, Lela was a devout Methodist and was active in church and community affairs, including the Home Demonstration Club. She was a graduate of the Southwestern Louisiana Industrial Institute at Lafayette (present-day U. S. L.).

Andrus and Scanlan were married by Judge Denis T. Canan of Crowley. Their marriage was sub-

was greatly curtailed by the demands of his political and business pursuits. The most significant of his many business interests was the Southwest Louisiana Electric Membership Corporation (SLEMCO), a rural electrical cooperative founded by Scanlon, Claude Brewer, A. K. Smith, and Sidney Bowles on June 11, 1937. (27) When anticipated government loans authorized by the Rural Electrification Administration failed to immediately materialize, Mike Scanlan signed a personal mortgage to cover operational expenditures for SLEMCO's first year of existence. (30) As a result of his efforts to sustain the co-op, Scanlan was elected SLEMCO's first president and served in that capacity for the remainder of his life.

On May 20, 1938, Mike Scanlan threw the switch that brought electricity to rural Acadiana. The new SLEMCO electrical system then included 256 member-owners and was one of the smallest utility companies in the United States. (29)

Scanlan always referred to SLEMCO as the "co-op." In fact, he used the two words synonymously. This lexical relationship gave rise to hostility by the local news media during the Red Scare of the McCarthy era, when cooperatives were mistakenly viewed as communistic. Following numerous verbal barrages by local newspapers, Scanlan held a nocturnal news conference in mid-April 1952 at the Slemco office building. The meeting was well attended, and, when most of the guests had arrived, Mike ordered his subordinates to douse the lights. He then dramatically entered the room with a kerosene lamp. As

the audience stood in silence, Scanlan delivered a brief address: "Gentlemen, this is what it was like to live on a farm before the co-op came along. Now try to take notes to write your story." Mike's dramatics produced the desired effect, and local newspapers headlined laudatory accounts of the assembly with the statement: "Mike Lights the Way." (30)

Nevertheless, Scanlan was not satisfied with the publicity generated by the news conference. He therefore entered SLEMCO in the Southwest-Louisiana Mid-Winter Fair Association exhibition and presented those in attendance with modern, electrical kitchen appliances. As a result of SLEMCO's participation, the Southwest Louisiana Mid-Winter Fair (31) enjoyed its most successful season. (32)



"MIKE LIGHTS THE WAY"

sequently recognized by the Catholic and Methodist churches.

Story, pp. 346-348; Mrs. Ruth Arceneaux, Church Point, Louisiana. Interviewed by the author on March 17, 1978. Mrs. Lionie Thibodaux, Church Point, Louisiana. Interviewed by the author on March 25, 1976. Mrs. Edith Deigle, Church Point, Louisiana. Interviewed by the author on April 7, 1976.

27. Rural Power, February 1961; Howard K. Hurwitz, *An Encyclopedic Dictionary of American History* (New York, 1974); *The Lafayette Daily Advertiser*, January 30, 1959; SLEMCO Power, May 1978.

28. Rural Power, May 1978; Scanlan Family Scrapbook.

29. SLEMCO Power, May 1978.

30. Scanlan Family Scrapbook; Rural Power, February 1961.

31. In the early 1950s, the fair was known as the Tri-Parish Fair.

32. Scanlan Family Scrapbook.

Under Scanlan's leadership SLEMCO borrowed over \$8,000,000 from the United States government over a twenty-one-year period; the cooperative subsequently repaid half of its debt as well as approximately \$830,000 in interest. Through these loans, SLEMCO dramatically increased its operations; indeed, by 1960, it had become the world's largest rural electric company. (33)

Scanlan applied his experience in business management to banking. Mike Scanlan, Edward Daigle and several Church Point merchants established the Bank of Commerce in Crowley. The bank's assets were subsequently purchased by Crowley businessmen; the Church Point branch, however, became autonomous on January 1, 1944 and assumed the name of Farmer's State Bank. (34) Mike served on the bank's board of directors until his death, and, in addition, assumed the duties of executive vice president following Edward Daigle's death on October 29, 1954. (35)

As a banker, Scanlan naturally had a vested interest in promoting the area's commercial development. As a means to that end, he helped organize the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association in 1938. Scanlan presided over the organization during the first nine years of its existence. (36)

Known and marketed nationally as "yams," Louisiana's sweet potatoes are currently in great demand. In the 1930s, however, this product, which had been cultivated in southwestern St. Landry Parish and northeastern Acadia Parish for decades, lacked national exposure, and thus

its sales were largely confined to Louisiana. In an effort to expand this product's market, the Association sought to upgrade the quality of Louisiana yams and sponsored a nationwide advertising campaign.

Many of the early executive sessions of the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association were held at Sunset, a St. Landry Parish community and self-proclaimed yam capital of the world. Apparently during one of these executive sessions, the Association decided to sponsor an annual festival, entitled the "Yambilee," as a means of promoting Louisiana yams. The first Yambilee was held at Opelousas in 1946, during Mike Scanlan's presidency. (37)

As a token of appreciation for his efforts to promote yams in the late 1930s and 1940s, Scanlan was elected "King Yam" of the 1956 Yambilee by the Louisiana Sweet Potato Advertising Commission. Mike's election was a magnified honor because he was not a St. Landry Parish resident. (38)

The 1956 Yambilee was held on October 5 and 6, but the festivities began on the night of the fourth, when a brilliant reception was given in Scanlan's honor. Midway through the festival—at noon on October 6—a special guest arrived, thirty-nine-year-old U. S. Senator John F. Kennedy. Upon greeting the Massachusetts solon, Scanlan presented him with a \$125 crate of choice yams. (39)

In addition to commercial organizations, such as the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association, Scanlan belonged to the Louisiana Warehouse Commission and the Louisiana Soil Conservation Commission. In addition, he was responsible for the

33. As of December 1973, slemco was composed of 43,504 member-owners, and the cooperative owned 5,743 miles of electrical lines. Advertiser, January 30, 1950; SLEMCO Power, May 1976.

34. Minutes of the Board of Directors Meetings, December 29, 1943, Farmers State Bank, Church Point, Louisiana. Since the bulk of said meetings were devoted to personal loans, the author was not permitted to examine the bank's minute books. Relevant information from this source was provided by Mrs. Julie Arceneaux, a Farmer's State Bank employee.

35. Ibid., October 29, 1954.

36. After stepping down as president in 1947, Scanlan became first vice president of the Louisiana Sweet Potato Association. Rural Power, February 1961; Scanlan Family Scrapbook.

37. Rural Power, n.d.; clipping from Mrs. Edith Daigle's personal library.

38. Mrs. Francis Bertinot; The Opelousas Daily World, October 4-7, 1958.

39. Scanlan Family Scrapbook; Church Point News, December 16, 1960.

creation of the Acadia Soil Conservation Commission in 1946.

In the early 1950s, Scanlan applied his administrative expertise gleaned from years of service on the above-mentioned boards to a fund-raising drive for Sacred Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Church Point.

The church then serving Sacred Heart Parish had been constructed in 1884, damaged by a hurricane in 1909, and subsequently repaired and enlarged. (40) By 1951, however, the building suffered from several major structural weaknesses in its walls, dictating the need for a new church. The ecclesiastical parish, however, lacked the necessary building funds. Therefore, on October 16, 1951, the parish pastor, Msgr. C. A. Bienvenue, organized a fund-raising drive and selected Mike Scanlan as chairman of the drive committee. (41)

Under Scanlan's leadership, the committee divided the ecclesiastical parish into 100 districts, each of which was supervised by a solicitor who was required to contact every parish resident for donations. The first drive was held during the week of November 4-11, 1951, and netted \$70,000. Several subsequent fund drives generated additional revenues. Scanlan, who instructed the solicitors on the use of account sheets and receipt books, played a major role in organizing these massive community efforts.

Six months after the initial fund-raising drive, a meeting was held for the purpose of selecting a building committee. This committee subsequently elected Edward Daigle as general chairman and Mike Scanlan as executive chairman. In addition, the committee commissioned Owen Southwell, a New Iberia architect, to design the parish church.

Once the plans were approved and building materials were selected, the committee advertised for bids by contractors. On July 7, 1952, a general contract totalling \$246,622 was awarded to Robert Angelle of Breaux Bridge. (42)

Building the present Sacred Heart of Mary Catholic Church required three years of cooperation by hundreds of local solicitors and businessmen. Scanlan's labors as executive chairman of the parish's two major committees were rewarded on November 25, 1954, when the new church was dedicated. (43)

Scanlan's public and commercial endeavors gained the Irishman statewide notoriety by the early 1950s. For example, in 1950, the Louisiana press proclaimed Scanlan "Dean of Louisiana's 640 Police Jurors" and "the backbone of what we fondly think of as local government." (44) In recognition of Mike Scanlan's position as Louisiana's most prominent local politician, Robert F. Kennon asked the Acadia Parish Police Jury President to become his running mate in the 1952 election. (45) Scanlan refused the invitation for two reasons: First, the electioneering incumbent upon a statewide campaign would have forced him to drastically curtail the amount of time which he devoted to his family and business interests; second, Scanlan refused to betray his Longite sympathies by joining Kennon's anti-Longite camp. (46).

Following his rejection of Kennon's generous offer, Mike Scanlan became an increasingly staunch supporter of Earl Long, the pro-Long faction's champion in the 1950s. Long acknowledged Scanlan's

40. The construction of twin chapels expanded the church's seating capacity to 1,450, making it the largest wooden church in Louisiana. C. A. Bienvenue, *Dedication of the New Church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart* (Abbeville, 1954), pp. 63-66. Hereafter cited as "Dedication Booklet."

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-31.

42. *Ibid.*

43. Rev. Michael Bekowski, Church Point, Louisiana. Interviewed by the author on March 19, 1976.

44. Scanlan Family Scrapbook.

45. Kennon's invitation was extended during a meeting with Scanlan et Swords sometime before the outset of the 1952 gubernatorial primaries. M. W. Scanlan, Jr.; Myrta Fair Craig; M. E. Kirk; T. Roosevelt Daigle; Mrs. Edith Daigle.

46. *Ibid.*



NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL LEADERS AGREE ON EARM RECONSTRUCTION

A-10-11-12

JANUARY, 1961

LATHAM 1

support in 1957, when he sent state Senator J. W. Cleveland to commission the Acadia Parish Police Jury President a colonel on Long's staff. In conferring the commission, Cleveland expressed his regret at "having to demote a king to a colonel." (47)

Because of his loyalty to "Uncle Earl," Scanlan was intensely interested in the 1960 Louisiana gubernatorial election in which the former campaigned for the office of lieutenant governor. The central issue in the campaign was Earl Long's sanity, for the former governor's wife had recently committed him to a mental institution. During the height of the controversy, Long announced that he would address the people of Church Point.

As anticipated, "Uncle Earl's" speech drew a sizable crowd, including Mike Scanlan and his eldest son, Mickey. The Scanlans, however, hid behind a car near the speaker's platform in order to objectively assess Long's mental condition. The address was a typical "Uncle Earl"

speech, sharply critical of his opponents and replete with plaudits for his own governmental record. After delineating his political accomplishments, Long thundered: "And if you don't believe me, ask Mike Scanlan; he'll tell you." Convulsing with laughter Scanlan turned to his son and said: "There's nothing wrong with that son-of-a-bitch." (48) The Acadia Parish Police Jury President remained firmly entrenched in the Long camp for the remainder of Earl's ultimately unsuccessful campaign.

Scanlan's continuing allegiance to the Democratic party, as well as his experience on numerous Louisiana soil conservation boards were acknowledged through his appointment, in 1960 to the National Resources Advisory Committee by President-elect John F. Kennedy. When his appointment was made public, Scanlan, who had previously discussed water and conservation problems with Kennedy aides, issued the following statement:

47. Lathar Frazer to M. W. Scanlan, September 27, 1957. Scanlan Family Scrapbook.

48. M. W. Scanlan, Jr.

I am convinced that real progress can be made toward the solution of these problems under Kennedy's Administration through sound investment of our natural resources. (49)

Scanlan never served on the above-mentioned board, however, for, in mid-November 1960, his health suddenly deteriorated. (50) His family and friends often urged Scanlan to consult a physician, but their efforts were frequently futile. At six p.m. on December 22, Mickey Scanlan admitted his father, who had become gravely ill, to Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital

at Lafayette. In addition, he summoned a priest to administer the last rites to his father. When the priest arrived at 4 a.m. on the morning of the twenty-third, Mike Scanlan looked up and said, "That bad, uh?" and died in the presence of his wife and son. (51)

Mike Scanlan held on to life as long as possible, and although his heart stopped beating, his legend lives on. Only six days after his death, the *Progressive Farmer* named him "Man of the Year" for 1960, (52) an honor customarily bestowed upon agricultural college presidents and state agricultural commissioners. "A Champion is Dead" read an obituary, (53) and indeed Acadia Parish had lost its first citizen.

49. Church Point News, November 18, 1960.

50. Scanlan had a remarkable constitution. He missed one session during his forty-four-year police jury career. Church Point News, December 13, 1960.

51. M. W. Scanlan, Jr.

52. *Progressive Farmer*, January 1961.

53. Scanlan Family Scrapbook; Church Point News, November 8, 1960; December 13, 1960.

1880 Census of New Iberia (continued)

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Mary	32	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Mary A.	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Joseph L.	5	Son		La.	La.	La.
Mary Lydia	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Joseph R.	2m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Delcom (Delcambre) Louis	56		Farmer	La.	La.	La.
Adalade	55	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Larodica	16	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Segoura Elazedor	10		At School	La.	La.	La.
Bower, Charles	17		Works at Brick Factory	La.	La.	La.
Olivia (Olivier), Alfred	28		Grocer	La.	La.	La.
Ellen	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Ireland	La.
Mary	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Ellen	7	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Willie	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Maiden Lane						
Migues, Alphonse	30		Pilot on Boat	La.	La.	La.
Eliza	25	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	N.H.	La.
Wellington	6m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Katie	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Brussard (illegible)	34	(female)	Housekpr.	La.	France	France
Ida	12	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Alice	10	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Francois	13	Son		La.	La.	La.
Lelia	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Derouen, Alex	60			La.	La.	La.
Short Street						
Bouvit?, Gaspard	54		Retired Baker	La.	France	France

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Fanvell, P.	53		Huckster	France	France	France
Pauline	55	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Arie	21	Son	Clerk	La.	France	France
Alexandre	19	Son	Carpenter	La.	France	France
Brusard, Jules	45	Son	Physician	France	France	France
Rosaline	30	Wife	Housekpr.	Mo.	N. Y.	Ga.
Caroline	1	Daughter		La.	Mo. (sic)	Mo.
Louise	3m	Daughter		La.	France	Mo.
Morrel, M. G.	39		Housekpr.	Liverpool	England	England
Grayson	22	Son	Works on R. R.	La.	Liverpool	Liverpool
Warren	20	Son	Piano Repairer	La.	N. Y.	Liverpool
Ralph	17	Son	At School	La.	N. Y.	Liverpool
Carstens, E. J.	38	Son	Hardware	La.	Denmark	France
Amelia	36	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	N. Y.	La.
Walter	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Amelia P.	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Ernest P.	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Josephine	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Maud M.	9m	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Roberts, John	35		Blacksmith	La.	Canada	Canada
Lagny, Amanda	17	Daughter		La.	La.	France
Smith, Mary	47		Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Kate	22	Daughter	Seamstress	La.	Ala.	La.
Alice	20	Daughter	At Home	La.	Ala.	La.
Amanda	17	Daughter	At Home	La.	Ala.	La.
Henry	15	Son	Clerk	Texas	Ala.	La.
William	10		At School	La.	Ala.	La.
Guarin, R.	52		Tinner	La.	France	La.
Honella	48	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Felix	26	Son	Tinner	La.	La.	La.
Aupane	22	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Alphonse	19	Son	Tinner	La.	La.	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Angeline	17	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Matilda	11	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Pauline	14	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Louise	7	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Alberta	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Weeks Street						
Decuir, Zenon	44		Hardware Merchant	La.	La.	La.
Rosa	36	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Santo Domingo	La.
Marie	10	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Lelia	8	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Iexa	7	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Milington	2	Son		La.	La.	La.
Frank	9m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Jameson, Charlie	29		Painter	Ill.	Ill.	Ill.
Amanda	26	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Ky.	La.
Tommie	7	Son		La.	Ill.	La.
Sheese?, Veuf	68		Housekpr.	France	France	France
Savir	12	Grandchild	At School	France	France	France
French, John	67		Carpenter	La.	N.H.	-
Emma	31	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	La.	Ark.
Laurah	14	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	Ark.
John E.	20	Son	Carpenter	La.	La.	Ark.
Stine, August	64		Gardner	La.	Ky.	La.
Mary Ann	59	Wife	Housekpr.	England	Scotland	England
William O.	25	Son	Works at Saw Mill	La.	La.	England
Kattie M.	20	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	England
Fannie J.	17	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	England
Stine, Victoria	20	Daughter-in-law	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.

Block Street

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Sorrells, James	66		Swamper	Georgia	N. C.	N. C.
Manerva	59	Wife	Housekpr.	Tenn.	Ireland	Tenn.
William E.	37	Son	Swamper	Texas	Ga.	Tenn.
Alphard	30	Son	Swamper	Texas	Ga.	Tenn.
Adell	26	Alphard's Wife	Seamstress	La.	France	La.
Mary	3	Daughter		La.	Texas	La.
Wesley	27	James' Son	Swamper	Texas	Ga.	Tenn.
James B.	28	James' Son	Swamper	Texas	Ga.	Tenn.
Gonsoulin, F.	40		Barkeeper	La.	La.	La.
Sylvia	37	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Sydney	6	Son		La.	La.	La.
Louise	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Taylor, John	43		Dry Goods Merchant	La.	N. J.	N. J.
Kate	34	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Miss.	Miss.
Louise	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Martha	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
John R.	5	Son		La.	La.	La.
Dubose R.	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Mary	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Decuir, Charles	38		Post Master	La.	La.	La.
Clores	31	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Cora	13	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Adelle	12	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Ida	10	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Camille	9	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Samuel	5	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Joseph	2	Son		La.	La.	La.
Delahoussaye, Charles	41		Lawyer	La.	La.	La.
C. V.	31	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Riggs, John E.	61		Farmer (Retired)	La.	Va.	Ky.
Manerva	55	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Ky.	La.
Eurillos	27	Son	Farmer	La.	La.	La.
Laurah A.	21	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Loula	19	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Ada	13	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Ida	13	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Cornelius	29	Son	Sugar Boiler	La.	La.	La.
Ida	25	Cornelius' Wife	At Home	Ga.	Ga.	N.C.
Brentley, Robert	38			Ala.	-	-
Emily	28	Wife	Teaching	La.	N.Y.	La.
Jackson	9	Son	At School	La.	Ala.	La.
Richard	7	Son	At School	La.	Ala.	La.
Walter	5	Son		La.	Ala.	La.
Ashbell	3	Son		La.	Ala.	La.
Augusta	7m	Daughter		La.	Ala.	La.
Canal Street						
Brun, Amile	40		French Claims Comm.	France	France	France
Angelina	36	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Erna	19	Daughter	At Home	La.	France	La.
Philicia	15	Daughter	At Home	La.	France	La.
Amile	13	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
Gaston	10	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
Philogene	5	Son		La.	France	La.
Lingla, Batram	40		Carpenter	France	France	France
Clemantine	37	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Mary	14	Daughter	At Home	La.	France	La.
Paul	12	Son		La.	France	La.
John	11	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
Josephine	7	Daughter		La.	France	La.

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Bartrand	5	Son		La.	France	La.
Joseph	2	Son		La.	France	La.
Benoit	5m	Son		La.	France	La.
Hebert, Balizair	47		Farmer	La.	La.	La.
Uphrasia	47	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Cora	25	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Pareta	8	Son		La.	La.	La.
Villea	32	Husband?	Planter	La.	La.	La.
Azilda	22	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Bonin, Theodore	33		Carpenter	La.	La.	La.
Mary	25	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.

(At this point an ink spot blurs out the remaining members of the Bonin family and most of the members of the next family, except for the names of the children: Lavinia, Lucy, Celestine, Harriet and Ambrose)

Hart, Thomas	24		Swamper	La.	Tenn.	La.
Annie	21	Wife	Housekpr.	Ark.	Tenn.	Tenn.
Hartwell	1	Son		La.	La.	Ark.
Theriot, Theophile	34		Farmer	La.	La.	La.
Alice	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Stella	7	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Flavia	5	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Sidney	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Andrew	1	Son		La.	La.	La.
Rheard, Victor	47		Shoemaker	La.	La.	La.
Mary	49	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Marie	7	Daughter		La.	France	France
Langua (Langlois), Emile	34		Justice of Peace	La.	La.	La.
Alex	32	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Carmelia	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Eugina	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Dora	7m	Daughter		La.	La.	La.

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's		Father's		Mother's	
				place of Birth	place of Birth	place of Birth	place of Birth	place of Birth	place of Birth
Migues, Martille	70		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Adinas	19	Grandchild	Paralyzed	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Delcom, Octave	18	Grandchild	Draying	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Delcom, Clara	17	Grandchild	At Home	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Delcom, Elna	12	Grandchild	At Home	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Signory, Artime	68		Seamstress	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Montagne, Fernand	22		Deputy Sheriff	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Vulnot, Jule	35		Dry Goods Merchant	France	France	France	France	France	France
Alida	33	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Adrien	8	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Emile	6	Son		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Annette	4	Daughter		France	France	France	France	France	France
Bergerie, Augustin	54			La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Anna	53	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Lonas	26	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Emily	22	Daughter	At Home	France	France	France	France	France	France
Saillot, Edward	38		Engineer	France	France	France	France	France	France
Anna	32	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France	France	France	France
Carl	11	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Rena	5	Son		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Amest	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Dameau, Trappe	40		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Mary	16	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Ben	13	Son	Works at Blacksmith	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Louise	12	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Arnold	9	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Antoinette	6	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Epolite	4	Son		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Migues, Ernest	32		Drayman	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Antoinette	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Louis J.	9	Son		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.
Haydre	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.	La.	La.	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Mary	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Felix	4m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Patin, Joseph	30		Wheelwright	Texas	La.	La.
Perry, John M.	24		Painter	Ky.	Ky.	Ky.
Patin, U. H.	20	Joseph's brother	Blacksmith	La.	La.	La.
Mestayer, John	44		Physician	La.	La.	La.
Aglace	39	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Frank	17	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Hebert, Thomas	26	Aglace's brother	Physician	La.	La.	La.
Delahoussaye, R.	19	Nephew	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Monlizorn, Alexandre	42		Carpenter	La.	France	Frar.
Marie	35	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Olympe	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Eleonore	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Dosetha	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Lorance	11m	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Flockerzie, Charles	42			Germany	Germany	Germany
Hardy, Wilhilmina	47	Wife	Housekpr.	Germany	Germany	Germany
Elizabeth	24	Daughter	At Home	La.	Germany	Germany
Caroline	18	Daughter	At Home	La.	Germany	Germany
Cornelia	10	Daughter	At School	La.	Germany	Germany
Agnes	7	Daughter	At School	La.	Germany	Germany
Iberia Street						
Bryant, Martin	54?		Carpenter	Va.	Va.	Va.
Hernance	36	Wife	Teacher	Guadeloupe	-	-
Paul L.	21	Son	Studying Law	La.	Va.	Guadeloupe
Charles	17	Son	At School	La.	Va.	Guadeloupe
Perry, Robert S.	44		Lawyer	La.	-	-
Bertha	8	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
	5					22
						25

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Lelia	5	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Robert	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Delahoussaye, L.	46		Notary	La.	La.	La.
Susan	36	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
LeBron, P. A.	44		Grocer	France	France	France
D. Marie	28	Sister	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Burley, George	28		Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Decuir, Cilveas	53		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Eugene	29	Son	Attending the interest of	La.	La.	La.
			Mother			
Arthur	23	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Clara	18	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Eugenie	16	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Emma	11	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Condron, Willis	32		Shoemaker	Prussia	France	Germany
Sarah	37	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Ohio	Ky.
Simpson, John	28		Laborer	La.	Ohio	Ky.
Octavie	23	Wife		La.	France	La.
Louise	7	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Jimmie	5	Son		La.	La.	La.
Barthe	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Renoudet, P. C.	32		Lawyer	La.	France	La.
Cecile	29	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Alfred	9	Son		La.	La.	La.
Marie	4	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Lawrence	7	Son		La.	La.	La.
Anthony	1	Son		La.	La.	La.
Bessan, Arsille	45		Constable	La.	Europe	Euope
Alena	30	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Ada	15	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Amile	17	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Paul	14	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.

Householder	Age	Relationship to Householder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Servat	8	Son	At School	La.	La.	La.
Celistine	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Corinne	4	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Ker, E. B.	51		Housekpr.	La.	Vermont	La.
Kate	25	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Fannie	23	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Maggie	21	Daughter	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Sallie	13	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Reils, Philip	28		Painter	La.	La.	La.
Eliza	28	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Clemance	7	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Elma	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Narcise	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Boula, Alexis	31		Carpenter	La.	La.	La.
Victoria	26	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	France
Olymphe	8	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Philicie	7	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Cloena	4	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Agnes?	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Charles	3m	Son		La.	La.	La.
Chargois, Alex	26		Driving Dray	La.	La.	La.
Alice	23	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Agness	2m	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Ducharme, J. D.	34		Drayman	La.	La.	La.
Corene	32	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Paul	13	Son	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Eugene	10	Son	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Desira	7	Son		La.	La.	La.
William	4	Son		La.	La.	La.
Rosa	2	Daughter		La.	La.	La.

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Cross? Street						
Riggs, Pelemachus	24	Wife	Sugar Boiler	La.	La.	La.
Cellina	18	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Alice	1	Daughter	Printer	La.	La.	La.
Veasy, Fred	45	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Desira	33	Son	Carpenter	La.	La.	La.
Louis	17	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Noales	12	Son		La.	La.	La.
Edgar	9	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Elvira	6	Son (sic)		La.	La.	La.
Rosalie	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
May	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Hacker, J. B.	68	Daughter	Housekpr.	La.	France	La.
Emily	34	Son	At Home	La.	La.	La.
M. P.	40	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Louis P.	9	Daughter (sic)	At School	La.	La.	La.
Jimmie A.	7	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Charles P.	30	Wife	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Adelle	26			La.	La.	La.
(This would appear to be the end of Cross? Street)						
Church Street						
Hurley, Howard	45	Wife	Farmer	N.C.	N.C.	N.C.
Elizabeth	65	Wife	Housekpr.	S.C.	S.C.	S.C.
Boota, Jule	32	Wife	Barkeeper	La.	La.	La.
Reora	22	Son	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
John	5	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Emily	3	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Corinne	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.

Housholder	Age	Relationship to Housholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Harreg, Celestine	57	Reora's mother	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Jacob	27	Son	Laborer	La.	La.	La.
Walter	20	Son	Laborer	La.	La.	La.
Sidney	17	Son	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Mignes, Alpha	30		Carpenter	La.	La.	La.
Marie	25	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Emily	6	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Dorville	1	Son		La.	La.	La.
Romero, Wilfred	12	Marie's brother	At School	La.	La.	La.
Delcome, Octave	18	Cousin	Boarder	La.	La.	La.
Hart, Hardwell	65		Swamper	Tenn.	Tenn.	Tenn.
Loda	46	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Maggie	18	Daughter	At Home	La.	Tenn.	La.
John	16	Son	Works in Swamp	La.	Tenn.	La.
Robert	12	Son	At School	La.	Tenn.	La.
Hawkins, Gilbert	33		Huckster	La.	Ky.	Ky.
Alzina	30	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Lilly	12	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Ella	11	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Robert	8	Son		La.	La.	La.
Hamilton	7	Son		La.	La.	La.
Jimmie	5	Son		La.	La.	La.
Charles	2	Son		La.	La.	La.
Mattie	1	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Barthe, Callix	42		Clerk	France	France	France
Sarah	21	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	N. Y.	Ireland
Arthur	1	Son		La.	France	La.
Murtagh, Kelly	12	Sister of Sarah		La.	N. Y.	Ireland
Wolf, T. J.	28		Physician	Ala.	Ala.	Ala.
Hacker, L. O.	36		Teacher	La.	La.	La.
Sarah	27	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	N. H.	La.
Emily	9	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.

Houscholder	Age	Relationship to Houscholder	Occupation	Person's place of Birth	Father's place of Birth	Mother's place of Birth
Martha?	6	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Hubard	3	Son		La.	La.	La.
Edna	10m	Daughter		La.	La.	La.
Boudreaux, Annette	18		Nurse	La.	La.	La.
Dauterive, Fenand	20	Nephew	Clerk	La.	La.	La.
Erath, August	37		Brewer	Switz.	Switz.	Switz.
Catherine	28	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	Germany	Germany
Charlotte	1	Daughter		La.	Switz.	La.
Condon, Victor	55		Barkeeper	France	France	France
Larroquette, François	47		Butcher	France	France	France
Francoise	37	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	France	France
John	11	Son	At School	La.	France	La.
Blanchet, Gustave	46		Physician	La.	La.	La.
Octava	40	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Orelia	33	Sister	At Home	La.	La.	La.
Blanchet, Norbert	32		Grocer	La.	La.	La.
Breaux, Joseph	41		Lawyer	La.	La.	La.
Eugenia	39	Wife		La.	France	La.
Fontlieu, Theodore	42		District Judge	La.	La.	La.
Ernestine	37	Wife	Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Albert	20	Son	Studying Law	La.	La.	La.
Charles	18	Son	Appointment to bar	La.	La.	La.
Laurence	15	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Vedal, Eugene	39		Barber	France	France	France
Harriet	39	Wife	Housekpr.	France	France	France
Senac, Harry	12	Stepson	At Home	La.	France	France
Vedal, Oscar	10	Son	At School	La.	France	France
—, Eugenia	4	Daughter		La.	France	France
—, Victoria	7	Daughter		La.	France	France
—, Ellen	9m	Daughter		La.	France	France
Fontlier, Pauline	36		Housekpr.	La.	La.	La.
Annette	11	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.
Pauline	7	Daughter	At School	La.	La.	La.

(to be continued)

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

The Jefferson Caffery Louisiana Room at University of Southwestern Louisiana has instituted a genealogical non-profit search service via the mail. A graduate assistant is available who will attempt to answer questions under the direction of Dennis Gibson, Jefferson Caffery Louisiana Room Librarian for \$5.00 for the first hour and \$3.00 for each additional hour. Xerox charges are \$.10 per page, if done in this library. The first hour charge includes up to 10 pages of xeroxing.

Church and courthouse records in Lafayette, Opelousas, Acadia, St. Martin, Iberia, and Vermilion parishes will also be searched. Charges for such searches will be \$10.00 plus the hourly wage for trips outside the city of Lafayette.

Search request forms are available from the following address:

Genealogical Search Service
Jefferson Caffery Louisiana Room
P. O. Box 4-3010
U.S.L.
Lafayette, Louisiana 70504

The fee for the initial hour must accompany your request. You will be billed for the remainder when the search is terminated.

THE WOMEN IN LOUISIANA
COLLECTION ESTABLISHED AT USL

Glenn R. Conrad, director of the Center for Louisiana Studies, announces that Dr. Ray Authement, president of the University of Southwestern Louisiana, has recently authorized The Women in Louisiana Collection. As a division of the Center, the collection will serve as a statewide research resource for women's studies. The collection will be housed at Dupre Library on the U.S.L. campus. The first collection of its kind to be established in the state, it joins the ranks of similar collections in California, Georgia and Minnesota.

The growth of women's studies in recent years underscores the necessity for a major archive of original source material, photographs, personal papers and diaries of individual women and organizations. As early as 1932, the distinguished historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, later named director of Radcliffe College's women's collection when it was established in 1943, deplored the absence of information on women. "From reading history in textbooks one would think half of our population made only a negligible contribution to history," he wrote. Certainly this neglect has been true in Louisiana history. The Women in Louisiana Collection will serve to fill the information

gap for Louisiana studies.

With its rich and diverse cultural background, Louisiana is a particularly fertile field for research in the contributions of women to the development of society. An analysis of the role and status of women within the various ethnic groups which blended to form modern Louisiana culture can make important methodological contributions to the historical understanding of the dynamics of social development. The experience of women has been ignored in the analysis of Louisiana's past, yet, as historian Mary Beard pointed out in the 1930s, women have for centuries been a force in history.

Vaughan Baker, assistant professor of history at U.S.L., has been appointed director of the collection. She will seek to work with individual women and with women's organizations to locate, describe and preserve records relating to the experience of women in Louisiana society from colonial times to the present and to make those materials available for research.

The collection will also contain materials useful to women's groups seeking background information for new social programs.